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MONTEFIORE
Liberal Judaism and Hellenism
and other essays

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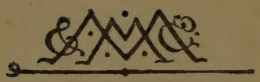

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LIBERAL JUDAISM AND HELLENISM

AND OTHER ESSAYS

BY

CLAUDE G. MONTEFIORE

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1918

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TO

LILY H. MONTAGU

ORIGINATOR AND INSPIRER

OF THE JEWISH RELIGIOUS UNION

FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF LIBERAL JUDAISM

THIS BOOK IS DEDICATED

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PREFACE

A YEAR or so before the War I was asked to give a short course of Lectures in the United States on some subject connected with Liberal Judaism. The Lectures would probably have been delivered in 1915, and two of them were actually written before the War began. The others were written subsequently. As, under the changed conditions of the world, it had become quite uncertain whether the Lectures would ever be delivered, or whether, indeed, I should ever again have the pleasure to find myself in America, I have determined to publish them as essays in book form before they become too musty and out of date. Most of them have been enlarged and altered since they were first written. Part of the first essay has already appeared in the *Hibbert Journal* for January 1918, and is here reprinted by permission. A large portion of the fifth essay, and a small portion of the sixth, were printed in the series of Papers for Jewish People, published by the Jewish Religious Union for the Advancement of Liberal Judaism. But I ought, perhaps, to add here that I do not in any way write as the official spokesman of

the Union, and that the opinions expressed on more than one point may not be shared by many members of the Union or of the Liberal Jewish Synagogue. When I say : "Liberal Judaism holds and teaches so and so," this must always be taken as an abbreviation for : "Liberal Judaism, in my conception of it, and in the conception of those who think with me, holds, or should hold, teaches, or should teach, so and so."

The essays which form this little book all deal with Liberal Judaism, and consequently contain various references to Orthodox Judaism. Not long ago one thought of Jews as divided into two classes only : Orthodox Jews and Liberal Jews. But, with the rise of modern Jewish nationalism, an entirely fresh division of Jews has made its appearance : nationalists and anti-nationalists. And this fresh division is, in regard to the old cause of difference, a cross division. For among the nationalists are Orthodox Jews and Liberal Jews ; and among the anti-nationalists are Orthodox Jews and Liberal Jews. While it is sad for Liberal Jews to be sharply separated from their fellow "Liberals" (as doubtless it is sad for Orthodox Jews to be separated from their fellow "Orthodox") upon so vital and important a subject, it is some compensation for us Liberal anti-nationalists to be brought nearer to many Orthodox Jews, and to be actively united with them upon a question which, in our eyes, is not merely political, but also religious,—united with them, that is, in maintaining that all Jews, whether Orthodox or Liberal, are held and linked together by

the tie, not of nationality, and not even, essentially and primarily, of race, but of a common religious faith—a faith which has, indeed, its two main sections or phases, but is yet justly described, as regards each of these sections, by a single and historic name. Though the Liberal remains no less ardent in his Liberalism, and the Orthodox no less ardent in his Orthodoxy, this active uniting together in a common religious cause has made one Liberal Jew, at any rate, appreciate the better, as regards Orthodox Judaism, what has lately been so well said in a more general connection :

"We may be firmly convinced that the religious experience of mankind cannot be subjected to the forms of the past, and yet we cannot seriously think that the religious experience of former ages meant nothing, or even that its forms are to us insignificant. Even the man who is most clear that for him the religion of the spirit is best expressed in the simplest terms cannot be unmoved by the words which have expressed the devotion of far more than a thousand years, and the rites and ceremonies which have slowly grown round this devotion." [1]

C. G. M.

[1] *Christianity in History*, by Dr. Vernon Bartlet and Dr. A. J. Carlyle (1917), p. 563.

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I

LIBERAL JUDAISM AND THE OLD TESTAMENT

In every phase of Judaism since the completion of the Canon, the Hebrew Bible, or Old Testament, has played a distinctive and essential part. And to-day, too, its position remains of central importance. Liberal Judaism, then, must take up a certain clear attitude towards those venerable documents that form the Hebrew Bible. It must be able to explain that attitude in tolerably simple words to all fairly educated persons. It is true that Liberal Judaism is itself no fixed quantity. It changes and will change. Nor is there in existence only one type or kind of Liberal Judaism. There are various kinds, or, shall we rather say, there are various degrees? The attitude of one kind or degree of Liberal Judaism to the Old Testament will not be wholly the same as the attitude of another. Nevertheless we have reached certain general agreements in our Liberalism. And thus, though there are still varieties and degrees (and most happily it is so, for absolute agreements are a sign of stagnation and decay), it is yet possible to put the question: What is the general attitude of Liberal Judaism to the Hebrew

Bible? My own answer may not be wholly the same as the answer of another, who is no less, or perhaps more, of a Liberal than I. But I hope that, in my main conclusions and arguments, I shall carry with me the sympathy and agreement of a large number of Liberal Jewish students and adherents.

They will, at any rate, agree with me as to the importance, the delicacy and the difficulty of the subject itself. A conflict is going on, which has to be settled: there are different needs which have to be harmonised. We want, and we mean, to continue to keep and to love our Hebrew Bible; but we want, and we mean, to be true to ourselves; we want, and we mean, never to palter with the truth. The Hebrew Bible is still very precious to us: we are convinced that it can, and will, remain precious to us—to us and to our children. But we do not conceal from ourselves that there are troubles connected with it which cause us anxiety and perplexity. It is these troubles which need adjustment and smoothing out. They are, in reality, less caused by the Hebrew Bible itself than by the way in which we used to be taught, or the way in which our fathers and grandfathers were taught, to regard the Bible. If we could only start afresh, the troubles would be less conspicuous and puzzling.

Let us make a sort of rough list of these troubles, so that we may have faced them at the very outset quite bravely and honestly. The first, then, is the critical trouble: the trouble of dates and authorship and accuracy. We no longer believe, for instance, that the Pentateuch is a unity, or that it was written by Moses. We no longer believe in the accuracy of all its statements (including the long series of miraculous stories), we no longer believe in the early

and Mosaic origin of most of its laws. Connected with this critical trouble is the trouble about inspiration. We do not deny a divine element in the Pentateuch or in the Prophets, but we recognise a large human element as well. We no longer see perfection in every law or every teaching. And this falling away from perfection we may regard as constituting the ethical trouble and the religious trouble. The ethics of the Hebrew Bible and its religious doctrines are not all of a piece. There is much development: there is also some retrogression. Some teaching is sublime and ideal: other teaching is superseded and imperfect. Then there is the liturgical trouble and the ceremonial trouble. The worship of the Synagogue has been closely mixed up with its attitude towards the Law. The ceremonies —both public and private—are dependent upon the Law, and are the outcome of the Law.

How are we to retain institutions—for instance, circumcision—the origin and sanction of which, as given in the Law, we no longer believe in? If the miracles connected with the Exodus did not take place, if the details of the festival were not then ordered by God, how can we still celebrate the Passover? And so on. It is easy to multiply the instances. Lastly, we may recall the education trouble. If we adults can thrash out a working theory for ourselves, which satisfies more or less fully our minds and hearts, what shall we say to our children? True and false they understand: good and bad: white and black. But in-between varieties they find more difficult. All the more need, then, to come to clearness ourselves, in order that we may do our best for the children. For in them lies our hope for the future. We, who are more than thirty

and forty and fifty, are all very well in our way, but the really interesting people are the boys and girls and the babies.

We may sum up our troubles by saying that we want to combine two attitudes towards the Old Testament, both of which we are convinced have value, and both of which we are convinced have validity. On the one hand, there is the attitude of freedom, about which I will say more in a moment; on the other hand, there is the attitude of authority. For though the supreme authority must be our own conscience, our unfettered and honest judgment, reacting to the most assured results of criticism, history and comparative religion, nevertheless *some* authority the Hebrew Bible is still to retain. It is not quite the same as other books, though it must be criticised, investigated and estimated in precisely the same ways as other books are investigated and estimated, and be subjected to the same canons of criticism and research. Yet when all is said and done, Liberal Judaism still emphatically asserts of this book: "Herein is the finger of God. Here are words, here are teachings, for which the Divine Spirit is, in some true sense, the Source." As the patriarch said of the place, so do we say of the book, "God is in it," and because God is in it, it has an authority of its own, and a special authority for *us*, who are the inheritors of the charge, of which the book describes the foundation, and to which it asserts the claim. "Ye are my witnesses." If that statement was made without *any* divine warranty, Liberal, as well as Orthodox, Judaism collapses like a pack of cards.

On a lower level the trouble of the two attitudes may be described as an attempt at, or the need of, a

reconciliation between freedom, on the one hand, and the maintenance of historical connection, on the other. Judaism is an historical religion, and Liberal Judaism must be so too. It cannot neglect the past, or ignore it. Its very organisation, its ceremonies, its public worship must, to a large extent, be the creations and the outcome of the past. Passover, Pentecost, Tabernacles, must still be our Liberal Jewish festivals. Our solemn and holy days must still be the Days of Memorial and Atonement.

And yet we must have freedom, by which I do not merely mean freedom to declare a given institution or rite obsolete and to neglect its observance, but freedom to be true to the highest dictates of our conscience, freedom to accept the surest conclusions of ingathered knowledge and research. Free eyes and ears, free heart and mind—these are fundamental necessities. If any statement or law in the Hebrew Bible does not seem to our considered judgment, and to our sifting and weighing conscience, the highest morality and religion, we must be free to say so. Liberal Judaism must require no prevarications, suppressions or palterings: it can do with no reservations, harmonisings or hidings. There must be no slippery explaining away, and no uncritical "reading into" the actual words of the text. If the Hebrew Bible be not capable of bearing the whitest and strongest light, then, too, are the days of Liberal Judaism numbered. Honesty and frankness: these we need no less than reverence and respect.

Let me now deal somewhat more fully with the difficulties that have been just enumerated. The "inspiration" difficulty and the "critical" difficulty may be taken together.

Liberal Jews of all shades and varieties unanim-

ously reject the doctrine of verbal inspiration. A doctrine of inspiration is substituted which, in the first place, allows for a human element of error and inadequacy, and in the second place, restricts the divine element in extent as well as in degree. That is to say, there are many utterances in the Bible, even though they be spoken in the name of God, which, on moral and religious grounds, we cannot call inspired at all. There are others which seem to deserve the name, and in which we mark the workings of the Divine Spirit. Now doubtless this is crudely and unphilosophically expressed, and Liberal Judaism earnestly needs its philosophers, who will put its conclusions into philosophic form, and give them a philosophic justification and expression. But for us ordinary people what I have said, if, as I believe, it enshrines a truth, will serve. The good and true are of God, and the better and truer they are, the more of God do they contain. Or shall we say, the better and truer they are in relation to their age and environment, the more of God do they contain? That is inspired and divine in the Bible which is original and good and true; that is purely human which was never good and was never true. If the prophet Malachi makes God say, "I hated Esau," that is neither good nor true; it is human, it is uninspired. If he says, "Have we not all one Father?" that is good and true: that may be human, but it is also inspired and divine.

With this divergent view of inspiration, Liberal Judaism combines a divergence from orthodoxy as regards the miraculous. The miracles recounted in the Biblical narratives are not regarded as evidence of their truth. This changed view has grave consequences. Each narrative has to be treated on its

merits, and the results will vary in different cases. In some cases the narrative in which the miraculous incident occurs may be supposed to be historic in the main, while the amount of historic fact—the proportion of fact to legend—may be very different in each particular instance. In other narratives, again, there may be no historic substratum whatever, or none which can now be elicited. The importance of a miraculous story is also of a very varying quantity. We are, for instance, tolerably unconcerned as to the substratum of fact in the miracles attributed to the prophet Elisha, whereas what Moses said and taught and did—when we have removed the miracles that surround his career—will always remain a fascinating and also an important problem. Together with our orthodox brethren we celebrate the festival of the giving of the Law. But Orthodox Judaism is, I think, more concerned about the literal truth of the narratives in the nineteenth and twentieth chapters of Exodus. It tends to cling to the reality of the lightnings and the thunders, and of the descent of God upon the mount, and of the divine voice audibly proclaiming the Ten Words, and of the tablets of stone upon which the divine artificer engraved them. That these marvels actually occurred Orthodox Judaism must, I think, maintain; whereas Liberal Judaism can look at such strange tales in a modern manner—a truly grave and important difference between us, which it is only fair and honest to take into serious account. Yet when this inspiration and miracle trouble has been fairly faced, it is doubtful whether many people will find it very troublesome. So far as the Hebrew Bible has true religious and ethical value and greatness, so far will that greatness and value be unaffected by any fresh view of inspira-

tion or by any denial of miracle. No miracle and no theory of inspiration can make a given utterance better than its contents. They can neither add to the excellence of that utterance nor diminish it. But, on the other hand, the old theory of inspiration can cause great trouble if it conflicts with our ethical and religious judgment. Nor can a miraculous tale bolster up a bad or an imperfect ethical utterance. To those who believe that God is the Source of Goodness, what is good is divine: the more good, the more divine. But we can never any more be induced to believe—and we are surely glad of it—that any conception or utterance is good and true and perfect because it is contained in a book which is alleged, either by itself or by any dogma or theory, to be inspired and divine. The authority of the good and the true lie in themselves. They carry with them their own credentials. The new view of inspiration, the small account of miracles, may cause trouble as regards liturgy, public worship and education. They need cause no trouble as regards the value and authority of all that the Bible contains which is excellent and noble and true. Nor does the Old Testament become "the same as any other book," if we do not cling to miracles and verbal inspiration. We cannot any longer maintain the greatness of the Law because its enactments are placed in the mouth of God. They have to justify themselves by themselves, not by an alleged authorship in heaven. Judged by its contents and by its effects, judged by its originality, judged by its character as a whole, the Old Testament will remain capable of maintaining its greatness and its worth even without the miracles, and without the verbal inspiration of all its parts and all its sentences. And if it cannot maintain them

without these, then they are not worth maintaining, and they will not be maintained.

Connected with this trouble about inspiration and miracles is the trouble about criticism. Liberal Judaism is bound to accept the assured conclusions of historical and critical investigation. Whither the argument of truth leads, thither Liberal Judaism must follow. Not that I mean by this that Liberal Judaism must cry "Amen" to every hypothesis of the critics as one succeeds the other. But I mean that it must be precisely as open-minded and as independent on any question which falls within the province of criticism and history as the Greek or Roman student would be open-minded and independent as to questions concerning Homer or Solon or Romulus. Orthodox Judaism, for instance, as I understand it, stands or falls with the unity and Mosaic authorship of the Pentateuch. And therefore orthodox Judaism has, as it were, to declare the subject settled before the study of it has begun. It has to say: "Whatever your impious conclusions may be, I assert that Moses, under God's guidance and inspiration, wrote the Pentateuch, or, at any rate, all the Pentateuchal laws, and to that assertion, whatever arguments may be brought forward upon the other side, I must and I shall adhere." Liberal Judaism, on the contrary, must be free. It must have no fear of truth; it has to recognise, and it does recognise, that any Biblical narrative or code must be studied and criticised precisely in the same way as the narratives and codes of any other book, and must receive no exceptional treatment whether favourable or hostile. As, then, the assured conclusions of honest research are that the Pentateuchal code is not a unity, that extremely little, if any,

of it goes back to Moses, and that much of it is centuries later than the Mosaic age, Liberal Judaism accepts the verdict and has to reckon with it. And accepting the verdict, Liberal Judaism has sought so to adjust itself that, in its relations with the past, it may be practically independent of historical and critical research. "Practically independent," I say: it does not follow, and I do not mean to assert, that the independence is absolute. But Liberal Judaism can never shut its eyes and its ears: it has always to be ready to hear and to listen, and it can never say to research, "Thus far shalt thou come and no farther: thus much can I allow and no more." Within its own field, history—by which I include criticism, comparative religion and subsidiary disciplines—must be unfettered and supreme, and Liberal Judaism must recognise its supremacy and bow to its decisions. For we worship the One God, who, in His flawless Unity, is Truth as well as Goodness, the Source of Knowledge as well as the Source of Love.

Here, again, the trouble turns out to be no trouble to Liberal Judaism. Criticism has justified our position and even partially created it. If, for instance, the Law were what it asserts itself, and what orthodox Judaism believes it, to be—the sheer and undiluted word of God dictated unto Moses—we could not stand towards it in an attitude of respectful, but unfettered, freedom. We could not, as we now do, pick and choose, accept and reject. We could not be free in the arrangements of our public worship, and in our liturgy, free in our judgments of the good and the permanent, the imperfect and the obsolete. Or rather, even as we saw in the inspiration trouble, our free judgments and conscience would be brought up sharp against a terrible con-

tradiction. For the perfectly good God would apparently have said and ordered what is by no means perfectly good. From all such contradictions, troubles and difficulties, we, by accepting the conclusions of criticism (quite apart from philosophical or metaphysical considerations) are saved and set free. Whether any rational theory of the divine can accept such a statement as, "And the Lord *spake* unto Moses, saying," matters not. Or, rather, we need not discuss it. But because we know that the words which God is alleged to have spoken to Moses proceed from a time far subsequent to Moses, the superscription troubles us no more.

On the other hand, we need not be troubled because the compilers of the laws added the superscriptions. We shall not regard the ordinance to "love the stranger" as any the less good, and as therefore any the less divine, because it is thus superscribed. For the laws of the various codes were put together by the compilers with the idea that they were legitimately to be regarded as Mosaic. Moses was the original fount of legislation, and all the right laws of Israel might be considered as the outflow of his spring. To the compilers, most of the laws were old in the sense that they found them or elaborated them, but did not invent and devise them. And such old laws were not only "Mosaic," but the will of God, and therefore divine. It is possible that a few of the latest laws, dealing with the priestly dues and the sacrifices, may have been drawn up by the compilers, and given a superscription which their compilers knew that they did not deserve. But of such laws I would observe, (1) that they are precisely those laws which have, for us, no moral or religious value or importance; (2) that

even these laws were the development of other and older laws; and (3) that we must not judge the compilers by modern conceptions of *this particular matter*. The compilers knew well enough that to lie is an evil and a sin, but it is very doubtful whether, even as regards the latest laws, they believed or realised that they were guilty of ascribing to God and to Moses what should not and could not be ascribed to them. Hence the results of criticism only emancipate. They need not cause us trouble. The antithesis: Absolute truth (*i.e.* Mosaic and divine), or valueless forgery, is a false antithesis, and belongs itself to an uncritical and unhistorical age.

As a result of this fresh point of view, which criticism has helped to provide for us, certain old controversies and theories have now lost their asperity and interest. They have gradually faded away under the newest light. We shall not seek to show that all moral and religious excellence is contained within the pages of the Hebrew Bible. In later Jewish literature outside the Bible there are also contributions of value and of truth. Nor does Liberal Judaism claim that God has suffered no aspect of truth to shine through other than Jewish windows. Whereas in olden days it seemed to aid men's faith in God if they thought that the teachers of other religions were either wicked or deluded, and that all religious literature outside their own was valueless or trivial, we now find it more consonant with the graciousness and goodness of God if, from many centres and at many times, the human spirit has been enlightened by the divine. Truth is complex and subtle and many-sided, and there is nothing alarming, but, on the contrary, there is much which is reassuring and comforting, if the

religious and moral truths of the Hebrew Bible can here and there be supplemented or deepened or emphasised by ingatherings from other races and other literatures than our own.

On the other hand, although, or rather just because, from our Liberal Jewish standpoint (which believes in progressive revelation, and is unable to hold that perfect and final truth can be enshrined within a book) we cannot consider that the Old Testament contains complete religious truth, we hardly feel even the necessity of replying to the view that the Old Testament is the mere preparation and the New Testament the complete fulfilment. I shall have to speak more in detail about the New Testament in my second chapter; it suffices here to say that the New Testament is also a book, and thus falls under the rule of imperfection and incompleteness which all books must display. The New Testament was written by men, and records the sayings of men, and must, therefore, partake, like the Old Testament, of human limitations and human inadequacies. Revelation is progressive; revelation—the enlightenment of man by God—did not cease in any particular year or at any particular date, and therefore the New Testament cannot contain, any more than the Old Testament can contain, the sum total of religious and ethical truth, both in extent and in degree.

The Liberal Jewish position is emancipating. It puts us upon a height. We breathe a purer and serener air. If there are troubles, there are also compensations. The Hebrew Bible remains to us in all its peculiar glory. We can take from it all it can give to us: we have no need to seek for more. We have no need to try to put into it, or to draw out from it, more than it contains. Its teachings were

added to and were developed, but it is not a mere preparation, it is not a mere part of a finished whole, it is not the dawn before the noontide. It is a whole in itself, and has its own comparative completeness; and in it will, as we believe, be found, and out of it will, as we believe, be drawn, the fundamental religious doctrines of all the ages that are to come. Over and above its central and loftiest teachings and its fundamental and permanent doctrines there are other doctrines and other teachings to be shed and discarded, but it is very doubtful whether the proportion of shed and discarded teachings and doctrines will be higher than in that other book to which it is so often supposed to be the mere introduction and the stepping-stone. For from the New Testament, too, as we believe, some central and loftiest teachings, some fundamental and permanent doctrines, will help to form "the religion of the future," but not less here than in the Old Testament are there, or will there be, other teachings and other doctrines to shed and to discard.

This shedding and discarding process brings us up to the ethical and religious troubles which were enumerated in our list. And once more the trouble can be regarded as an emancipation. Would it still be said: "Is a sacred Scripture worth having, can a Bible *be* a Bible, if it contain imperfections?" Liberal Judaism, which regards nothing as perfect save God alone, is not agitated by such a question. So long as the said Scripture contains much that is good and great and true, we are not perturbed that (being a book and creation of man, even if of man inspired by God) it should also contain much that is imperfect, transitional, obsolete, and even several things that are false or bad. The imperfect or false things would

justly worry us if we had to try to prove that they were neither false nor imperfect. But, from our Liberal point of view, we are in no wise obliged or concerned to do this. Hence the trouble falls away. We cherish the good and the true, we still feel them in the Old Testament in such high degree and in regard to such fundamental matters that, in spite of the imperfect, the obsolete and the false, the Hebrew Bible still retains for us its exclusive and peculiar position. We still regard it as we can regard no other book and no other Scripture. We are still, if I may use the phrase, rooted to the Old Testament in loyalty and love. In it we still find the kernel of our Judaism, in it we find, as it were, the heads, or almost all the heads—some of them, too, superbly worked out—of all, or almost all, our Liberal Jewish doctrines of to-day. Let us, then, now proceed to ask what it is that we *do* find in the Old Testament, what are those great heads of Jewish doctrine which, as we think, this noble book contains. Why is it, in other words, that in spite of our concessions to criticism, in spite of our disbelief in the miraculous, in spite of our new conception of inspiration, in spite of our refusal to read into the text what is not there, or to explain away from the text what is, we still can give to the Hebrew Bible this special and peculiar place?

Well, first of all, and most of all, we get from the Hebrew Bible our conception of God. I do not say that every statement concerning the Divine Being contained in the Hebrew Bible we subscribe to and approve of and believe in to-day. There is a higher and a lower teaching in the various books of the Bible; we appropriate the one, and we neglect or reject the other. Nor would I say that, in the two

thousand years that have passed since the last words of the Hebrew Bible were written down, we have not developed, enriched, purified and deepened, our conception of the Divine. But, none the less, it is true to say that the greater, more essential and more fundamental portion of our faith in God is not only derived from, but is practically identical with, the highest conception of God which the Hebrew Bible contains. We hold this conception, knowing full well its difficulties and its problems. The God of the Psalmists is essentially our God still. Nor is it by any means only the mere assertion of the Divine Unity—in the double sense that there is only one God and that this sole God is one—which we derive from the Bible. It is, to my thinking, far more. Far more characteristic, or, at any rate, far more essential, is the combination of the Unity with what we may call very imperfectly the Personality. It must, indeed, be admitted that the Biblical writers, or almost all of them, have no idea of the difficulties. They speak of the divine Personality without the smallest scruple or hesitation. God is as much a reality to them as their neighbour or themselves. Metaphysical problems as to the relation of God to the world—puzzles about transcendence and immanence—are quite unknown to them. But that is just where, or that is also where, their distinctive value comes in. For, as it seems to me, Liberal Judaism must stand or fall with the highest Old Testament conception of God. I do not mean that, as the years roll on, we may not be able to give a fuller and deeper explanation of the divine immanence and the divine transcendence; I do not mean that we cannot, or may not, construct a grander and truer theory of the divine relation to Israel and to the

world at large. But we can hardly continue to call ourselves Jews without a faith in a living God, loving and righteous, ruling and caring, Father and King, Master and Lord, the source of goodness, the object of prayer, the helper, the redeemer, the gracious and merciful, the all-present and eternal. This faith is not an easy faith. It is not easy from the theoretic point of view; it is not easy from the practical point of view. But this faith is what, to a very large extent, constitutes the Jew. The more vividly it is held, the more intensely it forms the key to a man's inmost character and way of life, the more emphatically is that man a Jew. And be this faith true or false, this much is clear, that it is a large faith, full of implications, and that the difference between those who hold it and those who reject it is enormous. Between those who can say, "The Lord is my shepherd: yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for Thou art with me"—who can say it and believe it and live on it and feed on it—and those, who, sadly or proudly, wistfully or indifferently, cannot say it and believe it, an immense gulf yawns, which it would be idle and foolish to ignore or to deny. Now this large, tremendous, inspiring faith derives for us, and indeed, in the last resort, derives for the whole Western world, from the Old Testament. But for *us* it derives from the Old Testament alone. And even though it may have been a little supplemented and purified and deepened elsewhere and later on, no supplement, no purification, no deepening, can compare with the main contribution, the main conception. "The Lord is my shepherd. The Lord is our light: in His light we see light. The Lord, the Lord, merciful and gracious God, long-suffering and abound-

ing in lovingkindness and in truth." What is added to this, however noble, what is grafted upon this, however sublime, seems to me mere trimmings. The essential doctrine, so daring, so triumphant, so gigantic, at once so inspiring and so hard, so transfiguring and so difficult, is already there. Thought and life are one thing with this God, another thing without this God. And this God comes to us from the Hebrew Bible. What are dates and authorships and miracles and outward events compared to this conception? If the Old Testament has given us our God, and if we still believe in God, what need we say more in its exaltation and its praise?

Yet we must draw out the implications. The God whom the Old Testament has given us is a God with whom men can enter into relations. He is both the God of the nation and the God of the individual. To the mysticism of the Psalter something can be added and was added, but the kernel of the matter is already there. "Whom have I in heaven but thee? and there is none upon earth that I desire beside thee." The personal individual aspect of religion, the communion of the creature with the Creator, of the child with the Father, of the soul with the Lover and Author of souls—all this goes back in fundamentals to the Hebrew Bible and is found in more than outline—one may truly say is found in essentials—within the best of its pages. If we had the Psalter and nothing else in religious literature for our guide and prompter, we should miss a great deal, but nevertheless a fine and helpful religious life could be lived upon the basis of the Psalter alone. The sense of sin; the desire for its overthrow; the craving for forgiveness; the joy in

communion ; all these aspects of religion, and many more, are to be found therein.

But with the individualistic side of religion the Hebrew Bible gives us also the social side. The idea of religion vitalising and inspiring a community, of a holy nation and a dedicated people, is also revealed by it. In addition to the Psalter we have the Prophets. It is unnecessary even to summarise their teachings. But to them is due the doctrine that the true service of God is mainly the service of man, that public religion is manifested less in outward worship and ceremonial institutions than in social righteousness, justice and compassion. The prophetic doctrine announces the true inwardness and the *true* outwardness of religion. But when to-day men rightly seek to unite religion to social service, and find in religion the sanction of democratic effort, what is this but an application to modern conditions of the burden of the prophetic teaching ?

It obviously in no wise falls within the scope and purpose of this essay to give any full and systematic account of the religious ideas and conceptions contained in the Old Testament. The lower and obsolete ideas do not concern us, though a word must be said later on as to why the trouble concerning them is really no trouble after all. But even the high and permanent ideas cannot be set forth in detail or in logical sequence. All that I am anxious now to point out is how much of, and how largely, the highest Old Testament religion is our religion to-day, and how largely our religion to-day coincides with the highest religious ideas and conceptions of the Old Testament.

One may rightly press the word religion. It is that which we draw from the Old Testament. Not

theology: not the philosophy of religion. For these we must go elsewhere. But the simple, ethical monotheism of social and practical life: the simple, yet profound and intimate (and even adequately mystical), monotheism of our private and secret life of prayer and communion. Religion for our work; religion for our duty; religion for relations with our society and our community; religion for days of joy and for days of sorrow; religion for needed sacrifice; religion for solitude and for being "alone with the Alone."

The Old Testament even, if we weld its highest conceptions together, and attempt to make of them a consistent and rounded whole, would nevertheless present a religion with many difficulties, some inadequacies and ragged edges. The difficulties we must solve, or leave unsolved, as best we can; the inadequacies we must supply, the ragged edges we must smooth, from other sources. But, even so, it is striking how many fundamental religious conceptions—fundamental, I mean, for Liberal Judaism to-day—we gain and draw from the Hebrew Bible. There is, for instance, first and foremost the union of religion and morality. People speak, and rightly, of the ethical monotheism of the Prophets. It is that ethical monotheism, with all its difficulties, which is our monotheism to-day. We cannot learn from the Old Testament what is the origin or explanation of evil. We cannot learn how to combine God's goodness with His omnipotence. The great puzzles are unexplained. But whether in wise or foolish faith, whether as children or as philosophers, whether as saints who know through their saintliness, or (for the huge majority of us) as very ordinary, average and erring people, who strive

to believe in the supremacy of righteousness, we all can draw from the Old Testament our hold upon the divine goodness. That God is good; that goodness, righteousness and love are more inexplicable without Him than with Him, that He is the source of goodness and its cause—these doctrines constitute the kernel of our monotheism to-day, as they constituted the kernel of the monotheism of the author of the fifty-first Psalm or the fortieth chapter of Isaiah. Then, again, that we stand in a certain relation to God; that He is our Father and King, our Master and Saviour; this, too, we find in "Old Testament religion" and this, too, constitutes a large portion of our own. We are His servants and children: *ordered* to obey, but also *glad* to obey. In obedience is our wisdom and our happiness. And obedience means just that we must try to be "good," to execute justice, to love compassion, to walk humbly; to aim at holiness, to "imitate" the Inimitable, and to love Him. We all admit that such a religion has many difficulties; we are Liberal Jews, if we say that, in spite of the difficulties, this religion satisfies our reason, our wills and our hearts more than its denial, and more than other religions of which we happen to know.

The outlook of the Old Testament is limited to earth. The doctrine of a life after death, a life not less, but more, worth having than the life on earth, separates both the Rabbinic religion and our own from even the highest "religion of the Old Testament." (The few clear allusions to the resurrection in the Old Testament, such as Isaiah xxvi. 19 and Daniel xii. 2, can, for my present purpose, be neglected.) But the remarkable point is that though this doctrine makes a great difference, it

does not invalidate, it only deepens and spiritualises, the Old Testament conception of the earthly life. This is a very important matter. The doctrine of the future life does not destroy the value of the earthly life. It does not make it mere preparation. It does not concentrate attention upon earth's sorrow and evils, and regard them as the only fitting occurrences for earthly existence. It does not urge or induce men to think it less important how they fashion and shape their earthly societies. It does not make justice upon earth less desirable because of the higher justice which is expected in heaven or in the New Jerusalem. It does not suggest that social well-being and happiness and fraternity are either unobtainable or undesirable, or even that it is not our bounden duty to seek for and further them, because a fuller and deeper happiness may await men beyond the grave. The Kingdom of God is still to be realised upon earth, although it is also, or is also to be, realised in heaven. Nay more, the Kingdom of God is progressively realised upon earth, in every piece of righteousness, of love and of unselfish happiness, which we may reciprocally give to, and get from, one another. If "heaven" is God's world, earth is, or should be made, God's world too; if it is worth while to die for what is to come after death, it is also meant to be worth while to live for what we can and ought to do before we die.

We have deepened the Old Testament view of life, but we have not thrown it over. And in this respect Judaism has been consistent throughout the ages. In spite of side tracks of pessimism and dualism, Judaism has never despaired of earthly life, or disregarded and depressed its value and its happiness. It has always considered it more than

a mere stepping-stone to heaven, more than a mere preparation for the life to come. It has never held that earth's sole importance consisted in its being the test whether you are to spend eternity "above" or "below," in misery or in joy.

That is why, in one very significant respect, the Old Testament, and Judaism generally, are so strangely or thoroughly modern. For some such estimation of earthly life is what we all (I suppose) feel about it to-day. And if we contrast this estimation with the general tone and line of the New Testament scriptures, we cannot fail to be struck by the difference. Here the Old Testament seems to be much more modern and vital than the New. Still more are we conscious of this contrast if we compare it with the mediaeval view of the world, the view of it, be it remembered, of an age when its thought was entirely dominated and controlled by Christianity and nothing else. Take such a summing up of the mediaeval view of the world as is given us by that excellent American scholar, Professor McGiffert, in his useful little book, *Protestant Thought before Kant*:

> With the traditional view of human nature was correlated the notion of the present world as evil, sharing in the curse of man and doomed to destruction as he is. To escape from it was the one great aim of the serious-minded man. Salvation meant not the salvation of the world itself, its transformation into something better and holier, but release from it in order to enjoy the blessedness of another world altogether. The dominant spirit was that of other-worldliness. To be a Christian meant to belong to another sphere than this, to have one's interest set on higher things, to live in the future, and to eschew the pleasures and enjoyments of the present. Asceticism was the Christian ideal of life. Man stands, as Thomas Aquinas says, between the

goods of this world and those of another. He who would possess the latter must eschew the former. He cannot have both, and he must take his choice. The more he crucifies his worldly desires and affections, and denies himself good things here, the more he may enjoy of future bliss. Christianity promised men blessings in a life beyond the grave at the expense of blessings here. It might, of course, bring happiness in this life, as the Christian contemplated the thought of the eternal felicity to come, but of earthly delight it had none to offer. Rather it demanded the sacrifice of such delight in order to the inheritance of joys belonging to another world. Belief in a future life was fundamental, and immortality an essential article of faith. Given doubt as to its reality, and the whole structure of Christian faith must fall to the ground. The sole significance of the present life lay in the fact that it was a probation for the life to come. It had worth only because of the everlasting issues which were determined by it. The few short years here are as nothing compared with the eternity beyond, and the wise man will think of that eternity, and live for it alone. So far as he may have interest in his fellow-men, and the spirit of love may prompt him to concern himself with their welfare, it will not be their present state which he will chiefly labour to improve. For them, as for himself, earthly conditions are of small account; the one important thing is the salvation of their immortal souls. It was not a mere accident, nor was it due to the immaturity of civilisation and the lack of sensibility to physical comfort, that social service on a large scale was postponed to modern times. Rather, it was because of an altogether different ideal, and an altogether different estimate of the present world.[1]

Now such a view of earthly life is not only unlike the Old Testament view of it. It is also unlike the Rabbinic view of it, just as it is unlike the modern and the Liberal-Jewish view of it. And yet Rabbinic and Liberal Judaism both accept the

[1] *Protestant Thought before Kant*, pp. 4-5.

dogma of the future life. I think, perhaps, this is one great reason why, "Christological" conceptions apart, the Old Testament religion is nearer to us than New Testament religion. We think so much more nobly (as Plato would say) of earth; we care so much more for its future; we are so much keener on social justice and social fraternity and on their possible earthly results; we are so much more anxious for earthly happiness; we value it—when morally and spiritually transfigured—so much more highly than the heroes of the New Testament. And that is why, or at least that is where, our religion derives more from Amos and the Law than it derives from Jesus and from Paul.

Art and beauty are absent. But we find the praise of wisdom, even though it be a one-sided wisdom. So of the three great human ends, the Old Testament recognises two, and with them, or combining with them, it emphasises also the religious life with God.

If our modern view of earthly life and of the world in which men live before they die seems to connect itself with, and to be helped by, the best Old Testament teachings, the same may also be said of our general working conception of man and human nature. We find no adequate and profound psychology: we get no explanation, no theory even, of "free will." For all such things we must go elsewhere. But in comparison, for example, with the conception of human nature in Paul or the Fourth Gospel, the conception of the Old Testament is much less supernatural and dualistic. It does not, therefore, follow that it is truer! But it is, at least, more sympathetic to the average man in the modern street. Men are not sharply divided into two

classes; those who are destined to be saved, and those who are not destined to be saved. The differences between good and evil are simpler, more graded, more natural. Men have not to be supernaturally born again in order to be "saved" or even to be "good." The transitions are less startling. The fleshly man is not sharply opposed to the spiritual man, the one essentially corrupt, the other essentially holy. Faith is not violently opposed to works. Man is frail and liable to sin,—"there is no man that sinneth not,"—but the situation is not hopeless; there is no original sin; man has not abruptly fallen, and is not, without the aid of a supernatural drama and sacramental processes, doomed to eternal punishment or unhappiness. On the contrary. The Old Testament makes practically no religious, and still less any theological, use of its own legend of Adam and Eve. It teaches that man can become good within his own limits. It looks forward to men becoming still better in the Golden Age of the future. God helps man to become "good," but his own efforts and his own will are important factors in the process. The Old Testament has no theory of freedom: it merely assumes that we are responsible for our actions, and that we merit praise and blame both from our fellowmen and from God. Again, the Old Testament has no theory of sin: it looks upon sin as disobedience or rebellion against God, but at the same time the content of sin is (apart from idolatry), for the Prophets and the highest teachers, ethical, a breaking of the moral law. Sin and moral wrong-doing are thus bound together. For God is good, and asks for "goodness" from men. Hence moral obliquity is religious disobedience. Forgiveness is more antique: it is primarily

the remission of punishment; but it is, at any rate, *also* the getting again into a happy attitude with God. And, above all, it is won by a combination of divine grace and of human repentance and amendment. When the Ninevites turned from their evil ways, they were forgiven. Man *can* repent: he can abandon his sin. The Old Testament grazes the gloomy problem of a sinfulness which cannot be shaken off, but its general attitude is hopeful, encouraging, befitting its God who is merciful and gracious and near to all who seek Him in sincerity and trust.

I do not think that all this means a shallow and ordinary religion, for how can a religion be shallow which is centred in a perfect God? The very conception seems to negate shallowness: is it a shallow religion which can exclaim, "Whom have I in heaven but thee? There is none upon earth that I desire beside thee"? Is it a shallow religion that can proclaim the injunction, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy strength," "Be ye holy for the Lord your God is holy"? But, however this may be, this Old Testament religion (for it is not unfair to call it so, though it be but a selection of Old Testament religious ideas) constitutes a large part of the religion of Judaism and of Liberal Judaism to-day. And it seems to accord well with modern conceptions of life and of man.

I fully admit that for the deepest problem of life, for the problem of suffering and of evil, the Old Testament is inadequate. I admit that its cardinal conception of suffering and evil as the product of human sin only serves our turn very imperfectly. We notoriously limit the doctrine, and make exceptions to it, in a number of different ways. But even here the Old Testament is not without rays of a

purer and more helpful light. Job is after all an Old Testament book, and the fifty-third chapter of Isaiah is a portion of Old Testament prophecy. And from them we learn that suffering is not always a punishment of sin; we learn high endurance; we learn of the discipline and education of sorrow and pain; we learn that suffering may be chosen voluntarily for the sake of others and in the fulfilment of a divine charge. Nor have we advanced much beyond these teachings even to-day.

Is it possible that, just *because* one cannot go to the Old Testament for any theories about the many problems of theology, the book is *therefore* still so fresh and permanently attractive? If it had theories, still more if it had one big predominating theory, it would be one-sided. Or, at any rate, if we now rejected the theory, the whole book would become antique. But just because we can so well pick and choose in the Old Testament, because, in a sense, of its many inconsistencies, can we find strength and value in it still. There is, indeed, no theory of faith, but there is living trust in God. There is no theory of grace or even of works, but there is the strong and simple conviction that we are responsible for our deeds, that we can become "good" or "bad," and that God helps us to do His will. There is no theory of human nature as either good or corrupt, only occasional utterances this way and that, but there is a predominating conviction that while man is frail and liable to sin, God is merciful and forgiving. The complexity and variety of human nature and human life seem to find their echo in the balance of Old Testament teaching, in its general sanity and many-sidedness. The various truths and experiences, which form the ingredients

and the justification of many diverse and discordant theories, seem to be often represented in the Old Testament. Here are the living constituents, unexaggerated and uncombined. Yet though there be sanity and balance, there is no want of eagerness, of passion, of enthusiasm. If we depend largely upon the best and highest things in the Old Testament for our religion, we need not, therefore, have a flabby, feeble, disjointed religion, a religion of disconnected odds and ends. No: the best and highest things can be welded into a consistent whole, and in these best and highest things there is passion, there is enthusiasm, as there is also spirituality, *religion*. We do not erect the moral respectability of the man in the street into a creed. Nor is our vision limited by the apparently somewhat pedestrian morality of the book of Proverbs. We want that pedestrian and homely morality too. But we want still more the passion and enthusiasm of the Prophets and the Psalmists. "Let justice roll down as water"—"As the heart pants after the water brooks, so pants my soul after thee, O God."—"How precious is thy lovingkindness, O God; the children of men take refuge under the shadow of thy wings."—"My soul follows *hard* after thee; thy right hand upholds me."—"Nation shall not lift up sword against nation: neither shall they learn war any more." Here are enthusiasm and passion, and here, encircling and giving direction to these, are ideals. Neither are obsolete. The passion is eternal: the ideals are still unrealised. Thus the highest of the Old Testament is surely of yesterday, to-day and for ever.

Thus it is that the religious trouble as regards the Old Testament constitutes for Liberal Judaism

(so far as adults are concerned) scarce any trouble at all. We are well aware that there is much in the *total* of the book which is religiously imperfect, obsolete and even false. There is much which is primitive, even superstitious; much, too, which, though not primitive, is, nevertheless, to be rejected. We do not, and we need not, greatly mind. We know all about Yahweh, the tribal God, about his partiality, his fierceness, his hatreds. We are not forgetful of the exaggerated doctrine of retribution, of the sacrificial system, of the ordeals, and of many another relic of ideas that have passed away. But these things do not bother us. For our religious purpose we ignore them. The Psalmist says, "The Lord is good to all, and His mercies are over all His works": and we press and emphasise the universality, whether the Psalmist *fully* meant it or not. We use, that is to say, the *best* of the Old Testament, and if, even about any portion of the best, there clings any ragged edge, we smooth it down. For the tendency is towards the heights, the completion. "God is One, and God is good," says the Old Testament. If in certain cases we can see more clearly than any Old Testament writer what that divine goodness must imply, be it so. We do not mind. But the doctrine that God is One and that God is good—this fundamental doctrine we learn from, and find in, the Old Testament. To it we turn to have our faith in the divine goodness strengthened and replenished. *Mutatis mutandis* we act in the same way as regards other points. The special point of Israel and the chosen people will come up for consideration later on.

Here, moreover, is one curious fact concerning Liberal Judaism and the Old Testament, that is of peculiar consequence. It is this. The doctrines and

ideas, the institutions and ceremonials, which do not harmonise with the best and the purest, and which we, therefore, must reject, are very easily shaken off. They are curiously detachable. In this respect Liberal Judaism is able to become, and does become, a very modern religion. The Old Testament has a priesthood ; we have got rid of the priest. The Old Testament has a sacrificial system ; we have none. The Old Testament may, I suppose, be said to have sacraments, if a sacrament means a sacred action, in which by material means a supernatural grace is afforded to the faithful ; we have none. Certainly there is more of the primitive in Orthodox Christianity than in Liberal—in some respects even than in Orthodox—Judaism. It may be questioned whether, if we except Unitarianism, Liberal Judaism cannot emancipate itself from the primitive more easily than Liberal Christianity.[1] However this may be, it is enough for us if our own emancipation is adequate and thorough.

And if we look to the fundamentals of morality, even as we to-day maintain them, are these too not contained in the best commands and utterances of the Old Testament ? Justice, on the one hand, compassion, on the other. Righteousness, too, and love. The ethics of the Old Testament may be capable of deepening and of amplification, yet if we collect together the best of what we find in it, it takes us a long way, and it needs a great deal of beating.

It is desirable to press this point somewhat fully, for the ethical side of the Old Testament has in recent times been a good deal depreciated or attacked. The depreciation seems to be generally carried out

[1] This remark was suggested to me by an article by Professor Hans Windisch in the *Theologisch Tijdschrift* (1917, Aflevering III. en IV.).

in two main ways. First, emphasis is laid upon its most primitive, or, at any rate, upon its least ethical, elements, and these are then regarded as characteristic of the whole. Secondly, the best things in it are either given a cheapening interpretation, or they are simply ignored.

The Old Testament is made to stand for certain unsatisfactory, inadequate or unethical sentiments and ideas, examples of which can undoubtedly be found in it, but which are contradicted by, or are in antagonism to, other sentiments and other ideas that are no less within it than the first. Both the New Testament and the Old Testament are regarded as homogeneous, but whereas the former is spoken of as if its religion and its morality were all on the level of its *best* things, the homogeneity of the latter is degraded to the level of its *worst.*

The Old Testament *does* contain the law of the "talio"—an eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth; it *does* contain imprecations upon the enemies of Israel, or of the pious in Israel; it *does* declare that God visits the sins of the fathers upon the children; it *does* say that He "hated" Esau; it *does* describe the awful punishments which He inflicts, or will inflict, upon His foes. And, doubtless, this catalogue of religious and moral inadequacies and anachronisms could easily be enlarged.

But these things are not the *only* teachings of the Old Testament, any more than the dull, obscure or indecent passages in Shakespeare are the only things to be found in all his works.

But how far are they the *characteristic* things? How far are they the things which predominate? How far have they been the influential things?

There is a certain tendency to put down the

religious and ethical faults and sins of Europe, whether in the present or the past, to the account of the Old Testament; its religious and ethical virtues to the account of the New. Such a tendency is clearly unhistorical. It would, however, be beyond my knowledge and powers to attempt a more just and accurate apportionment (if indeed the division be practicable). And, again, it may sometimes happen that in the same persons good and bad are closely commingled, and that for both *one* of the two Testaments is predominatingly responsible. The "fierceness" of the Puritans may not be the only quality which they owe to the Old Testament, just as the awful cruelties of the Inquisition may not be the only quality which they owe to the New.

It is unfortunate, doubtless, when the lower elements of a religious document are used instead of the higher. It is unfortunate if "what does the Lord require of thee, but to do justice and to love mercy," is forgotten, and if "thou shalt not suffer a sorcerer to live," is remembered. It is no less unfortunate if the grim dualism of the Fourth Gospel, or "I come to bring a sword," or the "everlasting fire," or "the devil" and "the goats," be remembered, and the great and noble things in the Gospels are forgotten. It is true that, in a certain sense, each book must accept its responsibility. Huge masses of evil and misery are directly traceable to the New Testament as well as huge masses of happiness and good. In a certain sense the book is equally responsible for both. So, too, with the good and evil results of the Hebrew Scriptures. But when we judge the books objectively, and assess them at their true value, we must, to a large extent, forget, or temporarily withdraw from our purview, the

results of the books, and appraise them for what they truly are.

But the question how far are the lower and primitive things in the Old Testament the characteristic and predominant things still remains over. Suppose there was, in very truth, a little very good and pure and permanent material in the Old Testament, but suppose that all this was a small and vanishing quantity in comparison with its cruelties, its imprecations, its "eye for an eye," its particularism and its narrowness; should we not be justified in regarding these inferior qualities as predominating, and styling them the characteristic features of the entire book?

This question suggests answers which will, I think, tend to elucidate the subject more fully.

Something depends on whether the excellences—whatever their bulk as written—seem occasional and adventitious, the flash of an isolated genius, not followed up and imitated, without influence upon the main stock or line of development, or whether they are of the very essence of the whole, its life and its spirit, informing the entire history and nature, and giving to them their type and peculiarity. In the second case, we may justly regard them as the essential characteristics of the whole. Now the excellences of the Old Testament are undoubtedly of this second kind. They are not casual, disconnected, occasional. They are organically connected with the entire development, bone of its bone, spirit of its spirit. The ethical Monotheism of the Prophets is reproduced in the Law and the Psalter and the Wisdom Literature. The virtues of justice and compassion are the keynotes of the growing morality. The cruelties and the imprecations are, as it were, the

hard opposing matter which the true spirit of the religion has not yet been able fully to overcome and to destroy.

That is one main reason why bulk does not determine the matter. Count up all the "good" sentences in the Old Testament, and suppose they come to *x*. Count up all the "bad" sentences, and suppose they come to *x* plus *y*. The matter is not thus so easily and arithmetically settled. The bad are not thereby proved to be the characteristic features of the whole. For the essence of the whole story and of the literature, the true nature and final worth of the religion, lie in the excellences and *not* in the defects. So we might say that the true Wordsworth—the Wordsworth that counts, the *poet* Wordsworth—is contained in much less than half the words which he wrote. It is the "good" which is characteristic of him, not the poor and the feeble and the bad.

But these more general reflections do not exhaust the subject. There are certain further special features both of Old Testament excellences and of Old Testament defects which should be carefully remembered. The defects or evils are partly primitive; the good had to work, or did work, upon a hard and intractable material. It is this hard and intractable material—the stiff-necked people—which makes the result all the more striking and strange. It seems to make the presence and working of the Divine Spirit all the more conclusive and irresistible. The native Hebrew or Jewish nature does not appear to be very attractive or delightful soil for the inspiration of God. (Even to-day the Jew divorced from religion is frequently a not over-attractive creature.) A considerable part of the "bad" of the Old Testa-

ment; a good deal of that which we now justly regard as obsolete or imperfect, or superseded, or disagreeable, or false, or even immoral, we may regard as "primitive." It is the stubborn subsoil, which has not yet been transformed and overcome.

But not all the defects are primitive. Some of the defects appear quite as strongly, or sometimes more strongly, and with fresh developments and guises, in later than in earlier documents. Now as regards many of *these* defects we may justly say that they are the defects of qualities. This is a very important matter and should never be forgotten. Take, for instance, the awful cruelties ordered in Deuteronomy to be applied to the Canaanites. Or take the horrible slaughters which are threatened by Ezekiel against the idolaters at the "Messianic" age and the final judgment. These things are the defects of a consuming passion for righteousness, for the service of the One God, for purity, for holiness. Or, again, take the "evil" examples of the doctrine of retribution and tit-for-tat. These things are the exaggerated and perverted results of a desire for justice. A finer justice would undoubtedly condemn them. But they are not merely and sheerly evil. They are rather imperfect and mistaken expressions of good: the aim is good, but the means are bad. The bad means are not *justified* because of the good end, but they are partially *explained*. They need not worry us too greatly. We can ignore them, or pass them by.

Next we may, I think, observe that the imperfections and evils of the Old Testament, though many in number, if we count the written verses, are not really so many, if we count the *kinds*. Fierceness, false conceptions or applications of justice, par-

ticularism—these are the three main kinds, and in each case the essential "good" doctrines of the Old Testament—its true creations and its veritable line of development—contradict, and are in antagonism to (as *we* can now easily see, though our ancestors could not), the imperfections and the evils. "The Lord, the Lord, merciful and gracious God"—a fundamental and essential doctrine, if ever there is one at all—contradicts the fierceness and the cruelty. So do the love and the pity, so do the justice and the compassion, which we are so constantly bidden to show to "neighbour" and to "stranger" (who these are, and what are their limitations, I will deal with later on). The righteousness and mercy which we are to practise and to love are in opposition to the "tit-for-tat" retribution and requital that were *then* thought to be their expression and embodiment. The doctrine of the One God, creator and lord of the spirits of all flesh, good to all, whose mercy is over all His works, is in flagrant contradiction to the "narrowness" and "particularism." We must interpret the election of Israel, not in terms of favouritism and partiality, but according to the highest doctrine of the Servant passages in the "second" Isaiah. Here too the Old Testament supplies the corrective to its own imperfections. The doctrine of the chosen people is sound enough. But it has to be interpreted to mean, not favouritism and presents, but pain, discipline and service. Thus the excellences are once more shown to be the essential, the positive, the permanent, things in the Old Testament. They are the things which really count, which make the book what it is, which give to it its value and its meaning, which stamp it with a peculiar and precious character, which

seem to reveal in it the finger and the spirit of God.

I have made free admissions about the defects and imperfections. Though they are limited in kinds, I have allowed that there are many examples of each kind. But an impartial verdict will, I believe, also have to allow and admit that the excellences are neither few in kinds nor in examples. On the purely ethical side do we always adequately remember what and how many these excellences are? If the best moral teachings, the best moral injunctions, and the best moral ideals, of the Old Testament were carried out and fully realised, what a paradise this earth would be! And in conjunction with the subject-matter of the excellences, we may fairly take the point that our own civilisation seems to rest upon, and to demand, just these Old Testament ideals. The moral principles which we hold highest are the very principles which underlie, or are exemplified by, the best Old Testament injunctions, maxims and aspirations. In some respects there has been a certain reversion to Old Testament ideals in quite modern times. True that in one important point the Old Testament needs supplementing by the doctrine which grew up between the Old Testament and the New—the doctrine which is as important to the Rabbis as it is to the authors of the Epistles and the Gospels—I mean the doctrine of the resurrection and the future life. But all the more keen, therefore, is the Old Testament on a good and holy earth, an earthly society of justice and compassion and love. And is not the best temper of our own time determined that, whatever may be in store for men after their deaths, we will seek to make this earth a better dwelling-place for them during their lives? The

Kingdom of God is to be realised upon earth as well as in heaven. It is worth while, it is right, it is desirable, to renovate and transform earth, as well as to expect and look forward to heaven. But this renovation or transforming of earth is an Old Testament ideal.

And how is it to be achieved? Should not we too say by the two or three Old Testament virtues of justice, compassion and lovingkindness? And are not these virtues the moving forces of the best Old Testament morality?

Think how they possessed the prophets. How they informed the prophetic religion. Justice, mercy, lovingkindness: these are the prophetic ideals. Social justice and social lovingkindness: the prophets set in motion a passion for these excellences, which found expression in the Law, the Psalter and the Wisdom Literature, and, later on, in the Rabbinic teachings as well. The best spirits in Israel showed, I think, a genius for social morality, they set going a passion for righteousness, which was so finely expressed by Amos when he said, "Let justice roll down as waters and righteousness as a perpetual stream."

Justice and compassion meet and mingle in, and are gathered up by, lovingkindness and love. The desire for justice and compassion spring from, and stimulate, a certain spirit of fraternity, of humanity. Do we, then, find fraternity and humanity in the best utterances of the Old Testament? Yes, certainly; not, indeed, perfectly expressed, but on the road, and even far along it. I do not mean humanity as a mere synonym of compassion, but I mean humanity even in the broader sense of a respect for man as man. It is not yet perfect; it meets with difficulties; it is confronted with prejudices, "defects

of qualities," old-established institutions and inherited hatreds. But yet it grows, and the ideas and the injunctions which it generates are easily capable of enlargement and purification. Think, first of all, of the respect demanded for the old, the deaf and the blind. Think of the charity inculcated to be shown to the widow and the orphan. Think of the tremendous sympathy exhibited by the prophets, and reflected in the Law and in the Proverbs, for the oppressed and the poor. No castes. "The rich and the poor meet together: the Lord is the maker of them all."

It may be said: but what of the fact that the Law, posterior to the Prophets as, taken as a whole, it is, yet recognised slavery? It did. But so far as Israelite slaves were concerned, it did what it could to soften and alleviate their lot. It did what it could to turn their slavery into something better and less permanent. Bondmen as they were in Egypt, the Israelites are bidden, for that very reason, to be pitiful themselves towards the helpless, the wretched and the poor. The fruit and flower of Old Testament are seen in the thirty-first chapter of Job. Speaking of his slave he says, "Did not He that made me in the womb make him? And did not One fashion us in the womb?" We have only to push Old Testament teaching to its full limits, to develop it along its own best lines, to reveal all that is implied in it, and slavery—whether from the point of view of religion or of morality—stands equally condemned.

But the caviller has a reply. "Israelite slaves," he answers, with something of a sneering stress upon the adjective. Over them, truly, the Israelites are not to rule "with rigour." But what of the Gentile and the foreigner?

I will come to that. First, however, let us realise the position within the community itself. I contend that the ideal there is one of loving fraternity. "Thou shalt not hate thy brother in thine heart." "Thou shalt not avenge nor bear any grudge against the children of thy people." The same ideal is expressed in the Wisdom Literature. "Love covers all sins." In conjunction with the repeated insistence upon justice and pity, the famous command, "Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself," deserves the fullest attention. At all events "neighbour" includes *all* the "children of thy people," whether rich or poor, bond or free.

Was the ideal reached? Surely not. What ideal ever has been reached? But it is there. The imprecatory psalms continually violate the command, "Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself," but the command stands unsullied none the less.

Yet it has been assailed on two sides. Its alleged limitation to the Israelite, on the one hand, its alleged exclusion of the enemy, upon the other.

The excellence and purity of Old Testament morality have been depreciated and assailed, in order to exalt thereby the excellence and originality of the New Testament and because of the well-known attack in the Sermon on the Mount. Jesus is there alleged to have said that "neighbour" excluded "enemy." The Law, or, at any rate, the older teaching, with which Jesus contrasts his own, is alleged to have bidden the Israelite to love his neighbour, but to hate his enemy. His enemy, therefore, is *not* his neighbour.

As to how far Jew and Christian have in practice "loved" their enemies and sought their good, I have no special information. I should be ready to hold

that honours are easy. I know no evidence which leads me to believe that Jews have either exceeded or fallen short of the measure of hate which throughout the ages has been shown and felt by Christians. I have no evidence to show that Christians have loved their enemies many fractions more or less than Jews have loved them. But the question is not one of practice : it is one of ideal and command, however greatly the command may have been neglected, however completely the infirmity of human nature may have rendered it a dead and idle letter.

There is no doubt that if the statement in Matthew was actually made by Jesus, it either does not mean what it appears to mean, or Jesus was guilty of a rhetorical exaggeration. There is no injunction in the Law, or elsewhere in the Old Testament, stating, "Thou shalt hate thy enemy." What makes the matter worse, and the misstatement still graver, is that Jesus is obviously not thinking here of any contrast between Israelite and Gentile. He is speaking *of* the Israelite only, and *to* the Israelite only. The foreigner is not within his thoughts, any more than he would be to a village preacher to-day. The people whom he is concerned with, the people whom he wants to make kindly and loving to each other, are the people who are in constant contact with each other : the villagers of Galilee are to love one another ; the Israelite is to love all his neighbours, even if these neighbours are his enemies. If Jesus had been thinking of the enemies of Israel, and not of private enemies, he would have said so. For all his other injunctions in the same chapter relate to private and individual morality, and not to national morality : if the injunction as to enemies had been intended to allude

to anything so startling as the love of *Israel's* enemies, if this injunction, unlike all the others, had related to *national* and not to individual morality, he would surely have expressed himself more clearly. Whether the historic Jesus would have asked his disciples to love the Gentile is capable of argument. There is a good deal to be said both for and against. What seems clear is that, in this particular passage and in this particular injunction, he is not thinking of the foreigner at all.

As regards, then, the Israelite enemy there is no command in the Old Testament that he is to be hated. But is there any command that he is to be loved? No, there is not. And I am far from approving those criticisms of modern Jewish writers who, instead of admiring the command, "Thou shalt love thine enemy," positively depreciate and condemn it. I think that Matthew v. 44-48 and Luke vi. 27, 28 are among the noblest specimens of human ethics, among the finest of human ideals and commands. I still think this, though when I remember the nationality of the commentators who have most exhausted their vocabulary in exaltation of these Gospel passages and in depreciation of Old Testament teaching, I have painful twinges of hesitation and of doubt. But what *is* the love of enemies? How is it to be shown? I do not suppose that Jesus meant that we are to feel for our enemies the same kind of feeling that we feel for our wives, our children, and our friends. The Jewish critics are doubtless right when they say that to ask for such a feeling would be absurd and undesirable. But, as so often when critics of one religion attack the injunctions and ideals of another, the Jewish critics set up a ninepin in order to knock it down. It is an

easy and delightful entertainment, but of dubious utility. Jesus, I am sure, was thinking of something which *is* practicable. And the explanation of the "love" demanded is best given in the simple words: "Do good to them that hate you." And so far as feelings are concerned, we *can* avoid the desire of revenge, we *can* avoid delight when the enemy falls into misfortune. Now love of this practical kind, and the quenching of feelings of this undesirable sort, are both demanded by the Old Testament itself. Therefore, as regards the enemy—still be it remembered the private enemy of the individual—there is no difference between the morality of the Old Testament and the New. Both are noble. The New confirms, rounds off, and sums up (in grand and impressive words) the teaching of the Old.

It is well to recall the passages. In the oldest of the Pentateuchal Codes, we have the ordinance: "If thou meet thine enemy's ox or his ass going astray, thou shalt surely bring it back to him again. If thou see the ass of him that hates thee lying under his burden, thou shalt surely help to loosen it." Then in the later Code: "Thou shalt not hate thy brother in thy heart. Thou shalt not avenge, nor bear any grudge against the children of thy people." These laws produce in the Wisdom Literature the following effects. "Say not thou, I will recompense evil." "Rejoice not when thine enemy falls." "Say not, I will do so to him as he has done to me; I will render to the man according to his work." "If thine enemy be hungry, give him bread to eat; if he be thirsty, give him water to drink." And among the terrible sins of which Job solemnly declares himself guiltless, is this: "If I rejoiced at the destruction of him that hated me; or lifted up myself when evil

found him." Surely this teaching is on the same lines, and points in the same direction, as the teaching of Jesus. At the most the second is the culmination of the first. Here, then, too the foundations of our present ideals, and much of their embodiment, are to be found in the pages of the Hebrew Bible.

But what about the alleged narrowness and particularism? Well, I do not maintain that *every* moral excellence is found, or equally conspicuous, in the Old Testament. I fully admit that narrowness and particularism disfigure many of its pages. The great point, however, for us Liberal Jews to remember is that this narrowness and particularism are easily shed. They are in flat contradiction (as I have already hinted) to Old Testament monotheism, to the doctrine that God is one, that He is good to *all*, and that His mercy is over *all* His works. They are in contradiction to the doctrine of man, and not merely the Israelite, being created in the divine image. They are in contradiction to the doctrine that the object of Israel's election is to disseminate throughout the world the knowledge of God. They are in contradiction to the highest Messianic ideal. We can use the Old Testament to confute the Old Testament, the broad to confute the narrow, the universal hope to confute the particularist desires.

We may freely allow that the universalism which we now cherish is partly due to two influences over and above Old Testament monotheism. One is the teaching of St. Paul; the other is the teaching of the Stoics. But neither Paul nor the Stoics could have wrought what they did for Europe without the monotheism of the Jews.

Admitting, then, a measure of particularism in

Old Testament teaching, have we also to admit that if the Old Testament did not teach the Israelite to hate his private and personal enemy, it *did* teach him to hate the enemy of his nation and his God? Or even worse: Did it teach him only to love his brother Israelite, but to regard every non-Israelite as an enemy and to hate him?

To go anything like as far as this would be, I think, very unfair. There is no doubt that there *was* much hatred of the idolater and of the oppressor. And there is also no doubt that the idolater, as, to the Christian, the heretic, was looked upon as the enemy of God. So was the oppressor of Israel: he too was God's enemy as well as Israel's.

But that there is any direct inculcation of hatred for national enemies is inaccurate. There is doubtless much expression of it. It is the great infirmity of the Old Testament, just as the ready way in which the enemies of Jesus, and, in the fourth Gospel, the Jews, are relegated to destruction, devil and hell, is the great infirmity of the New Testament. There is glass in both our houses: we had far better not throw stones at one another.

The real reason why Christian critics are so painfully anxious to show up the limitations of the Old Testament injunction, "Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself," is to leave more space for the originality of Jesus. It is a nuisance that the injunction, "Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself," is in the Old Testament at all. For if neighbour meant everybody, what more would be left for Jesus to say? Therefore it is most important to show that neighbour most emphatically did not mean everybody, and that the lawgiver spoke with conscious and most intentional limitation. And, on the other hand, it

is most important to show that when Jesus uses or quotes the injunction, he *does* mean everybody, and that he always has the Gentile in his mind as well as the Jew. Thus even Professor Kent—a distinguished and admirable American scholar—in his excellent and invaluable volume, "Israel's Laws and Legal Precedents," in that capital work, "The Student's Old Testament," observes with regard to Leviticus xix. 17, 18, "In these laws which relate to inner motives and feelings, the Hebrew lawgivers almost attain to the New Testament ideal. In the brief command in Leviticus xix. 18*b* Jesus found the epitome of all Old Testament legislation regarding man's duty to his fellow-men. He, however, raised it above its narrower Israelitish setting and made it of universal application." To emphasise this Israelite setting, Professor Kent translates the first part of Leviticus xix. 18, "Thou shalt not take vengeance, nor bear a grudge against the members of thy race," just as he translates Leviticus xix. 17*a*, "Thou shalt not hate thy fellow-countryman in thy heart." It may, however, be questioned whether the *i* is not dotted, and the *t* is not crossed, too sharply. I do not for a moment intend to imply that by any of the words he used the legislator meant to include the alien or the non-Israelite. But I also believe that he did not mean consciously and definitely to exclude them. There was not, as might, I think, be almost gathered from Professor Kent's renderings, a sort of intended implication: "Remember, I say thy fellow-countrymen and the members of thy race. I do *not* say, and I even consciously exclude, the non-Israelite. Him you need not love: *him*, indeed, you may *hate*!" That would, I think, be going too far. The non-Israelite was not in the legislator's mind one

way or the other, any more than when a Christian preacher, in ordinary times, bids his congregation to love one another, he is either consciously including, or consciously excluding, the Mahommedan and the Jew. He is not thinking of them one way or the other. It is quite enough for him, and indeed for the ordinary, practical purposes of life it is quite enough for them, if his hearers love the people with whom they habitually come in contact. And these in 99 cases out of 100 are neither Mahommedans nor Jews.

It is another matter, which it does not fall within my present purpose to discuss, whether it is really accurate to say that Jesus raised the command "above its narrower Israelitish setting and" consciously "made it of universal application." I do not, however, think that it is historically and critically sound to go so far. As regards the Sermon on the Mount, if Jesus had intended to include, or been thinking of, the non-Israelite, he would have said so. And, indeed, considering the limitations and prejudices of his age and his environment, if he had intended to make the command of universal application, he would hardly have left it to be inferred from the (alleged) general tenor of his teaching. As regards the parable of the Good Samaritan, which is the only other passage in the Synoptic Gospels that is in point, I would not for worlds deny the sublimity of its teaching. But critically speaking, though Halévy's suggestion (adopted by me in my Synoptic Gospels) is studiously ignored by Christian commentators, it still seems to me immensely strong. As it stands, the parable is, I most gladly admit, a very important step towards a universalisation of the command. The Liberal Jew is in no way concerned to restrict the divine inspira-

tion to the Hebrew Bible, or to deny the measure of advance made in certain directions (along with a measure of retrogression) by the writers of the New Testament.

Assuming, however, that the injunction to love one's neighbour as oneself, did not consciously include, if it did not intentionally exclude, the non-Israelite and the foreigner (and this assumption would, I think, be correct), the Pentateuchal law, nevertheless, did itself make some progress in the universalistic direction. An interesting use is made in Deuteronomy of the sojourn in Egypt during which ill-treatment was received by the Israelites at the hands of the Egyptians. We get here a very significant instance of an inverted "Talio," a moralised and topsy-turvy tit for tat. Here, again, *we* can enlarge a principle which, as regards the Ammonite and the Moabite, the lawgivers failed to apply or make use of themselves. "Thou shalt not abhor an Egyptian, for thou wast a stranger in his land." "A stranger in his land." The Hebrew word is "*Ger*," and the laws about the "*Gerim*" constitute an important feature of all the Codes. Thus in the oldest code we have the order: "Thou shalt not oppress a stranger: for ye know the heart of a stranger, seeing ye were strangers in the land of Egypt." Even though the second half of the verse be an editorial addition, it seems a pity that Professor Kent should have omitted those exquisite words: "Ye know the heart of a stranger." In Deuteronomy we are told that God loves the stranger; "love ye, therefore, the stranger: for ye were strangers in the land of Egypt." The later "Holiness" Code takes the same line. "The stranger that dwells with you shall be unto you as one born among you, and thou

shalt love him as thyself: for ye were strangers in the land of Egypt."[1]

Certainly, then, the limitation to love only the fellow-countrymen was, to some extent, at any rate, broken through!

But who was the "stranger"? The law to love him is not wholly pleasing to those who wish to depreciate the morality of the Old Testament. Hence they are at pains to point out that the stranger is, in no wise, the mere foreigner, any casual Gentile or non-Israelite, but strictly and solely the resident alien, the man who had left his own tribe or people, and taken up his residence in, and put himself under the protection of, Israel. The *Ger* and the *Nochri* (foreigner) are sharply distinguished from each other.

All this is perfectly true. The *Ger* is *not* the foreigner: he *is* the resident alien. It is for him that the latest Codes declare that there is to be the same law as for the native born. Yet he need not, unless he wish, fully adopt the *religion* of his adopted land, and thus, unless he submitted to circumcision, he could not "eat the passover" (Exodus xii. 45, 48). It is, therefore, true enough that the famous laws of Deuteronomy x. 19, and Leviticus xix. 34, should really be rendered thus: "Love ye, therefore, the resident alien: for ye were resident aliens in the land of Egypt." "The resident alien that dwells with you shall be unto you as one born among you, and thou shalt love him as thyself: for ye were resident aliens in the land of Egypt."

Is the value of the law or its morality much diminished? Perhaps, somewhat. But not greatly.

[1] The words "thou shalt love him as thyself" are omitted in Professor Kent's translation.

For, after all, the resident alien was *not* of the same blood or race as the Israelite : he was *not* a fellow-countryman. And, secondly, he was the sort of foreigner with whom (as I suppose) the Israelite came most frequently into contact. He *was* the foreigner whose kind treatment was of real practical importance. He was the foreigner who was under the protection of no foreign power : who had given up his allegiance to his own tribe or nation, the protection of which he therefore no longer continued to enjoy (see Professor Kent's note, *op. cit.* p. 66).

Surely even for us Europeans or Americans to-day the injunction, "Love ye, therefore, the resident alien," is by no means superfluous. For us, too, is not he sometimes the most uncomfortable, the most real, the most vividly present, the most awkward, of all foreigners? It is pretty easy to love the Tartar and the Tibetan ; but how about the Negro ? And it is odd that they who are at greatest pains to point out the sad deficiencies of the Old Testament in its limitation of love to the resident alien are often those who most conspicuously violate that Law, the moral level of which they consider themselves to have so far exceeded and passed beyond ! "One Law for the native born and the resident alien. Ye shall love him as yourselves." Then how about the Jew? Is he not the "*Ger*" ? Has he not come to seek protection and hospitality, and taken up his permanent abode, in the lands of his adoption? Let us, then, by all means universalise Old Testament morality still further, but let us first of all seek to live up to it as it stands !

That there was a genius for religion amid Israel, or among some of the chosen spirits in Israel, seems clear. But the genius was for a special kind of

religion. Was there any genius for morality? We may, I think, truly say that there was no genius for, and no tendency towards, either religious or ethical speculation. But there *was* a genius for a special and peculiar combination of ethics and religion.

The Old Testament does not contain everything in religion which we have and prize and want to-day. But it does contain, as it seems to me, the *main* things. It certainly does not contain everything in morality which we possess and prize and need to-day. But as regards both religion and morality it does seem to me, with curious felicity and genius, to have fastened upon, discovered and joined together (not always by any means in a perfect or fully developed form) the main, great, practical things, from which further progress and development became possible and could be effected. On the whole, too, it avoided the things which impeded such progress and such development. Its defects are pretty easily shed; its *qualities* are definite, practical and easily capable of expansion.

Its monotheism reveals to us at once its strength and its limitations. We do not go to the Old Testament for any theory or speculation as to the nature of God and of His relation to the world. The metaphysical difficulties in its own conception of God do not disturb it for a moment: it leaves them unnoticed. So we must get over them or explain them, or accept them, as best we can, with other help from other sources. But what it does do is to give us in its conception of God a peculiar combination of religion and morality. It has given us the sublime doctrine of One God, above and beyond the world, yet "near" the world, the world's creator, ruler, sustainer, its wisdom and its Spirit.

But it has given us this doctrine, not as a key to knowledge, but as the secret of righteousness. For the essence of its doctrine is not so much that God is One as that He is good; that He is perfect in righteousness and compassion; that He cares for His creation; that He is holy. This is a conception of God which is of value for human life, for human action, for human goodness. This is a conception, the defects of which, as presented to us in its various stages of development, can be removed, but the comforts and sweetness of which abide. And this is a conception which makes for righteousness and love, because the service of this righteous and loving God is declared by the purest Old Testament genius to reside in acts of righteousness and love towards man. Hence it is that this genius—this Old Testament genius—is neither purely religious nor purely ethical, but is essentially and emphatically a peculiar and special combination both of morality and of religion.

To have vitally connected morality with the doctrine of *One* God, and to have vitally connected the service of that One God with morality—this is the glory of the Old Testament. It riveted religion and morality together both for God and for man. Man cannot do without forms and institutions and outward embodiments; and there is plenty of them in the Old Testament. But to put them for ever in their proper place, which, again, means to unite morality and religion together, we have the simple, yet profound and far-reaching, doctrine of the prophets. "I desire love and not sacrifice." "Let justice roll down like water." "What does the Lord require of thee, but to do justly and to love compassion?" And the lesson was learnt; though

sometimes clouded and ignored, it was never wholly forgotten. The community knew at bottom that the sacrifice of God was a broken spirit; it knew that the true fast was to deal bread to the hungry; it knew that forgiveness was only vouchsafed to the wicked when they turned from their evil way; and to remind itself of these truths it incorporated the fifty-first psalm and the fifty-eighth chapter of Isaiah and the book of Jonah in the liturgy of its great, outward and ceremonial, Atonement Day.

Let us consider, too, certain other ethical principles which we may detect in the Old Testament writings. Some of them I have possibly mentioned before, but they may fitly be resumed here.

It is a common criticism upon Old Testament morality and religion to speak of its eudaemonism, its stress upon outward well-being ("prosperity is the blessing of the Old Testament"), its coarse doctrine of reward and punishment. And I fully admit that a certain purification is here necessary. There is a measure of truth in the criticism. We need to supplement and correct Old Testament teaching in these respects with the idealism of the Platonic philosophy and the Stoics. That is true. But if we are out to find all the good we can in the Old Testament instead of all the temporary, the obsolete or the evil, we shall perceive that behind the defects there lurks a truth, a truth in which we place our hope and confidence even to-day. That truth is the justified union of happiness and righteousness. We not only ought to do justly and to love mercy; but through justice and mercy and brotherly love human society becomes happier and more prosperous. It is in every sense worth while to be just. The increase of justice makes for

increase of human well-being. And human well-being is itself worth while. The life of a just society is good: worth having and living. The "outwardness" of the Old Testament is part of its hopefulness (a feature to which I shall recur). Do we not need, and feed upon, that hopefulness even to-day?

So, too, I find of value and help the union, in Old Testament estimation, of righteousness and wisdom, of goodness and truth. It is wise to be good. The intellectual and moral virtues are united in their source. God is the source of wisdom as He is the source of goodness: He is Himself the God of Truth as well as the God of Righteousness. In *His* unity the unity of righteousness and truth are assured and guaranteed. And it is not only wise to *be* good: it is wise to *do* good. Active goodness is worth while and divine. I draw out these doctrines from Old Testament teaching very easily, and I find them of great encouragement. They fortify and console.

We may, I think, notice too in the Old Testament a certain excellent sanity and balance. And yet in the Prophets, at any rate, there is no lack of enthusiasm and ardour. I observe this balance in the choice of the two fundamental virtues—justice and compassion. Justice, and again, justice: excellent; and surely the democracy of to-day echoes the cry. But justice alone will not suffice: there will always be room for those virtues of the heart—mercy, pity, compassion. Justice and pity are combined in love. Or again, putting an already mentioned truth another way, we must love and serve God, and we must allot time, and devote actions, to His exclusive service (for us, public worship, private prayer). But the chief field

of His love and His service lies in *moral* action. The service of man is the best service of God. This idea, it seems to me, we have learnt and evolved from the Old Testament.

Another idea, too, there is which was elaborated by the Rabbis, but which goes back, by adequate implication, to Old Testament sources. It connects with Old Testament hopefulness, and with the good side of Old Testament "materialism" and "earthliness."

It has already been said that Liberal, no less than Orthodox, Judaism, accepts that development of doctrine which took place between the close of the Old Testament and the beginning of the New Testament period. We accept and require the doctrine of the future life. But that doctrine in its Jewish forms does not lead to the depreciation of earthly life. It only gives to the Old Testament high evaluation of earthly life a securer basis. It adds to the right attachment to earthly life a right detachment, and, perhaps too, I should also say, it adds to right enjoyment a right asceticism.

It is this right and high evaluation of human life, this right enjoyment of, and attachment to, life, which are suggested, and even taught, by the Hebrew Scriptures. Life is sanctified. We are to be holy, as life's source and giver is holy. Hence, first, a concern and respect for human life, wanting, as other Old Testament excellences are wanting, in Greek morality. Infanticide, the exposure of children, would be abhorrent to the Hebrew of the Law. Abortion would also be repudiated. Again, we see in Old Testament morality a growing respect for chastity. Most immensely significant for the Old Testament sense of cleanliness and of purity is its

stern prohibition of unnatural offences. When we recall the wide prevalence of these offences in the East, and in Greece, and the tentative and inadequate way in which even the best teachers of Greece (and not all of these teachers) condemned them, we may, I think, justly regard Israel's attitude towards these horrors as both a moral and a religious inspiration. The "natural" is not condemned outright, for earthly life is not bad, but good. It is to be enjoyed; it is to continue. Not celibacy is the ideal, but marriage and family life. The spirit is to sanctify the flesh. To eat and drink are the fundamental gifts of God. Eat, then, and drink as befits a creature who can worship the divine Bestower—with gladness, with self-control, with a word of thanks and of blessing. I do not say that these ideas are explicit in the Old Testament; still less do I say that in Old Testament times they were always acted up to. But I do say that they are implicit in the *trend* of the best Old Testament teaching, and that they were largely drawn out and made explicit by the Rabbis.

The curious and inseparable commixture of morality and religion in Old Testament ideals is further seen in the conception of holiness. It is true that holiness was not yet perfectly moralised. It had an outward, as well as an inward, signification. But the inward and ethical element predominated in the highest minds. Nevertheless, the injunction "be holy" means something more, something deeper, than the injunction "be good," just as the holy God means something more than the good God. What is this something more? It is not easy to say, but I think that this something more is just that thrill, that fervour, that touch of purity, reverence and awe, in which a morality that depends upon, and reaches up

to, a perfect and adorable God differs from a morality (however exalted) which is without Him. And in this conception of holiness, and in this injunction to Israel to be holy, the idea was started, so fruitful and so spiritual, of the true Imitation of God. So of this idea, too, I find the beginnings in the Old Testament, and it appeals to me, just as that entire conception of God appeals to me, which keeps God and man apart, and yet brings them together, which denies the "essential unity of the divine and the human," and yet bids man imitate, so far as man can, the inimitable perfections of the Divine. Man can never become divine, but he can draw nearer and nearer unto God.

And what of Israel itself? What of its duty and its destiny? Here, too, do we not build and rest upon the highest of the Old Testament utterances? "Ye shall be unto me a Kingdom of Priests." "Ye are my witnesses; thou art my servant: with his stripes we have been healed." Our theory of Israel's mission—of the religious charge entrusted to the Jews for the benefit of the world—goes back to the Babylonian Isaiah. Perhaps it is here that both the religious and ethical trouble are by some most acutely felt. I have dealt with the ethical trouble at considerable length: here I can be briefer. It cannot be denied that the peculiar relation of Israel to God and of God to Israel is of the very kernel of the Old Testament. And it also cannot be denied that the relation is often unethically presented: it may even be said that there are very few Old Testament writers and passages which are wholly free from a certain measure of particularism. Moreover, the trouble is that this particularism is most marked and most awkward just when the God idea has become most

developed and most clearly monotheistic. It was far less disagreeable in the earliest times than in the latest times. Hence we cannot say, "This is merely one of the *primitive* imperfections of the Old Testament. The later writers are free from it." Nor can we say, "The Prophets are clear of it. It is only one of the compromises which had to be taken up in the Law." Law, prophets and psalter share it alike. That in primitive times Yahweh should be specially concerned in the welfare of his people is reasonable enough. For Yahweh starts as a just, but as a tribal, God. He cares for Israel, as Chemosh cares for Moab. But that the God of the spirits of all flesh, the one and only God, creator of heaven and earth,—that *He* should have a chosen people, that *He* should be more concerned in the prosperity of Israel than in the prosperity of Edom, that *He* should have enemies, simply because Israel has enemies, all this seems to be a doctrine utterly inconsistent with ethical monotheism, utterly inconsistent with our modern ideas whether of morality or of religion. And I fully agree that it is! The only limitation—but it is an important and crucial limitation—that I would make is that, while I accept the doctrine of the chosen people, I interpret it to mean, not favouritism and presents, but discipline and service. Liberal Judaism holds, not that God *cared* more for the Israelites than for the Edomites, but that he entrusted Israel with a charge, a task, a mission. This task is not for ourselves, but for humanity, not for our benefit, but for the world's. The education for, and the (very imperfect) fulfilment of, this charge did not mean, and has not meant, *more* prosperity, but *less* prosperity, not *less* suffering, but *more* suffering.

That this is not the usual conception of the Old Testament, that this is not its usual and predominant interpretation of the "chosen people," is obvious. To maintain that it was would be hopelessly uncritical and absurd. But two points must be noticed. The first is that any other interpretation entirely conflicts with the ethical monotheism of the Old Testament itself. We must, therefore (as in other instances), correct and refute the Old Testament by the Old Testament. The second point is that though this interpretation is not the prevailing or the usual interpretation of the doctrine of Israel's election, a very fair, if incomplete, form of it is found in a few Old Testament passages which *we* can legitimately combine and draw out. Thus we have, to begin with, the famous verse in Amos, "You only have I known of all the families of the earth: *therefore* will I visit upon you your iniquities." God will deal more strictly with Israel than with "the nations." This general prophetic conception—characteristic, at least, for the prophets of the eighth and seventh centuries—gave a deadly blow to the idea that it was God's province and duty to shower special favours and presents upon Israel, His people. Next we have the prophetic hope of a world religion, a universal acknowledgment of the one true God, arising in the future as the final result of Israel's life and teaching. "From Zion shall the Law go forth and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem." "The earth shall be filled with the knowledge of the Lord as the waters cover the sea." "God's house shall be called a house of prayer for all peoples." "Yet will I gather others unto him besides his own that are gathered." More definite even than these passages, and more significant, is the conception of the Servant in the Second Isaiah. "Ye

are my witnesses." Israel has been elected that God's salvation may spread to the ends of the earth. This conception culminates in the famous fifty-third chapter, which the consensus of critics now regards as the confession of the nations concerning the misjudged and maltreated Israel. Through *his* stripes —patiently and voluntarily undergone—*they* have been healed. Nothing can well be in greater contradiction to the old doctrine than this. (It has to be sorrowfully admitted that it made little headway or impression.) Lastly, we can quote the conception in Exodus of "the kingdom of priests," which seems to point towards the idea of a mission. Priests hardly discharge their office for themselves: they discharge it for others. Modern exegesis has shown that it would not be quite fair to quote Genesis xii. 3 and its parallels, but that the universalist interpretation was making itself felt and becoming known, even within the Old Testament period, we may gather from the rendering of the Septuagint.

Now the doctrine of Israel's election as interpreted by Liberal Judaism to-day (and I imagine that Orthodox Judaism interprets it in the same way) may be true or false. The immense majority of mankind would say that it was false, or, at all events, that the only "mission" Israel had was to produce Christianity, and that its election terminated, therefore, with the birth of Christianity's founder. I have not to argue the question here. My point is simply that, whether true or false, the doctrine, as we interpret it, is not *unethical*. It does not conflict with the moral perfection of God. It need cause us no "trouble." Further the doctrine, in its main outline, is to be found in the Old Testament, so that here, too, we

stand by, and cling to, the Old Testament at its highest and its best.

Thus it is that I find the essentials of our religion —yes, even of Liberal Judaism—already within the four corners of the Hebrew Bible. It is true that I also find a good deal there which is no longer part of my religion ; it is also true that there are some doctrines or elements in my religion which I do not find in the Hebrew Bible ; but nevertheless the root of the matter, to use an Old Testament phrase, is there. The root of the matter, and many of the fairest flowers.

Hence though the attitude of Liberal Judaism to the Hebrew Bible is not the same attitude as that of Orthodox Judaism, it is yet an attitude of reverence, of gratitude, of admiration and of love. It is an attitude unlike that which we hold to any other book in the world. To no other book can we render the homage which to this book we gladly and freely pay. Now this homage, as it seems to me,—this reverence and admiration and love—ought to have practical results. It ought to issue in study, and the deeper study of the few should bear fruit for the lesser study of the many. There is still much to be done in order that the best teachings of the Hebrew Bible may be properly appreciated by every member of our community. We need editions of various portions with explanatory notes : and these notes should be written from a standpoint which should be both critical and reverential. Nothing should be read into the text, but all should be brought out of it which is really and honestly there. And then too it should be shown how the teaching of the Old Testament has been expanded, illustrated and deepened in later Jewish literature, how its

limitations have gradually been overcome, and how even to-day the same divine Spirit is helping us in our endeavours towards righteousness and truth.

For that is part of our case. In a certain sense we inherit and accept, though with grave modifications, the old Rabbinic theory of a further inspiration and a further revelation beyond the limits of the Bible. We take our stand upon the doctrine of continuous and progressive revelation. We find no difficulty in the hypothesis that certain elements of our faith to-day are later than the latest portions of the Hebrew Bible, and that we owe them partly to the Rabbinical period, partly to still later ages, and partly to our own time. If God helped our fathers to the attainment of fuller truth, that is no reason why He should not help us. On the contrary it is a reason why He should. Just in the same way we believe that the Judaism of 2018 will be a fuller and purer Judaism—through God's help—than is the Judaism of to-day. Take, for instance, the doctrine of a future life. That doctrine was only in its germs at the very close of the Biblical period. It rapidly develops afterwards in the Rabbinical era. Hellenistic Judaism contributes to its purification. It slowly frees itself from the materialistic conceptions of a bodily resurrection. It is possible that the doctrine may be further developed, purified and strengthened in the years that are to come. Meanwhile who shall deny that the Rabbi who said: "Better is one hour of repentance and good deeds in this world than the whole life of the world to come; and better is one hour of blissfulness of spirit in the world to come than the whole life of this world," or the Hellenistic Jew who said: "The

souls of the righteous are in the hand of God ; their hope is full of immortality," were without the inspiration of God ?

Liberal Judaism, then, is far from seeking to make a sharp and violent distinction between the Hebrew Bible, on the one hand, and the Rabbinic literature, upon the other, or between the Written Law, on the one hand, and the Oral Law, upon the other. Such a violent separation is opposed to the whole principle of progressive revelation. "The Hebrew Bible and the Hebrew Bible alone," or, still worse, "the Pentateuch and the Pentateuch alone, is the religion of Jews," would be the falsest and the most fatal of cries. The fourth article of the German *Richtlinien* correctly says, "The historic basis of the Jewish religion is the Hebrew Bible, as well as the subsequent further development of Judaism in the Talmud, the Rabbinic writings and the philosophers up till the present time" ; "up till," which means "including." We should not hesitate to say that the Wisdom of Solomon is more inspired than the book of Esther, and the Sayings of the Fathers (despite some very pedestrian and foolish things in it) than the books of Chronicles. So, too, when it is a question of laws, there can be no philosophic justification—though there may be here and there a practical justification—for saying : "We will obey the Pentateuchal laws ; we will reject the Rabbinic laws ; we will refuse to eat oysters, but we will freely mix meat and milk together."

On the other hand, if you take book for book, and compare—though I admit that comparisons are mostly odious, foolish and impossible—the huge and many volumes of the Talmud with the one modest volume which holds all the portions of the Hebrew

Bible together, there can be no question which is the greater and the more inspired. There can be no question in which the essence and basis of Judaism are contained; there can be no question to which our reverence, our admiration and our gratitude are more greatly due. For, in a certain sense, we must not be too hard upon our Karaites, whether ancient or modern! If only they had thought as much of Prophets and Psalter as they thought of the Pentateuch! Bible and Talmud are, indeed, separated by a big interval of value and of genius. The one is for the student (and he should not be too closely immersed in it); the other is for mankind. The one is for now and then—and perhaps more for then than now; the other is for always and for every day.

Though very briefly, imperfectly and unsystematically, I have now touched upon the three or four *theoretic* troubles which, at the outset, it was mentioned that Liberal Judaism must face and deal with. The two or three *practical* troubles remain, but these I do not propose to discuss upon the present occasion. The education trouble would need an essay to itself; it stands by itself. As to the ceremonial and liturgical "trouble," these two are closely connected with the newer conception of, and the Liberal attitude towards, the Law, concerning which there will be just a word to say later on. The gist of the trouble is how to preserve contact and continuity with the past, while, nevertheless, to do and say nothing which does not represent, and is not consistent with, the Liberal beliefs of to-day. Ceremonies, festivals and liturgy must, to a very large extent, be taken over from the past—adopted and not freshly created. Words must be used which will mean one thing to a believing orthodox Jew,

another to a Liberal Jew. There is no harm in this, provided that the new meaning and its difference from the old are explained to the worshipper. It may even be that in the recitation of a great and famous document some few words or sentences may have to be said which, in any natural sense, we cannot accept at all. Thus "jealousy" can only be predicated of God in a sense which explains the word altogether away! That God visits "the sins of the fathers upon the children" can only be maintained by us in a sense very different from the sense which was meant by the author or expander or compiler of the Second Commandment. And yet because of a difficulty of this kind it would, I think, not only be absurd to abolish the reading of the Ten Words from our Liberal Synagogues, but it would be wrong to edit or mangle or abbreviate so well-known and famous a document.

So, again, as regards such a phrase as "the Sabbath of the Lord thy God," or sentences which tell how the Festivals were ordained and devised by God. Some of these, in the liturgy, may be modified to suit our present beliefs, but even after all that is possible has been done in this direction, several must remain, in which the old conception will shine out. To us the Sabbath is the Sabbath of God in a very different sense from the sense in which it was or is the Sabbath of God to—let us say—an average Rabbinic Jew of the Talmudic period or even an average orthodox Jew of to-day. The story of the Sabbath, as it would be told by a critical investigator, differs considerably from the story as given in Genesis or in the Exodus version of the Ten Commandments. To us the Sabbath is a divine institution, partly because of its beneficent results, partly because

it is an integral and important part of that whole history of Israel in which we discern the will and the spirit of God.

So of the festivals. Passover and Pentecost were not ordained once and for all by God in the manner described by the Pentateuch. The "event" which the Rabbis, without Pentateuchal authority, made Pentecost commemorate did not—in our opinion—take place with all the supernatural and miraculous accompaniments which are so vividly described to us in the Book of Exodus. And so on. Nevertheless, Liberal Judaism rightly clings to the five festivals and holy days of the Pentateuch. It uses the Rabbinic precedent about Pentecost to interpret these festivals and holy days in its own way. And it so happens that there is no real difficulty in doing so. Passover becomes the festival celebrating Freedom and the establishment of our religion. Pentecost becomes the festival celebrating our ideas of Law and of Revelation, which are ideas as vital to us as to our orthodox brethren in faith, even though the meaning and content of these ideas are very different to us and to them. Tabernacles becomes the festival of Nature and its relation to man and to God. The Day of Memorial and the Day of Atonement are widely different even to an Orthodox Jew from the "originals" of these two institutions in the Pentateuch. No more spiritual and "catholic" holy day than the modern Day of Atonement in its Liberal Jewish form can well be conceived. It is most deeply interesting to trace its historic genesis and development from the outward, priestly, ritualistic, tribal, and partly superstitious ceremony described in Leviticus xvi., to the purely spiritual, inward, universal, holy day which we celebrate now. No more triumphant or successful

instance of development—without break of historic connection—could possibly be imagined.

Again, in our use of the Old Testament in public (or in private) worship, we often have to denationalise and universalise the meaning. There is no harm in doing so, if we are careful to distinguish very carefully and honestly between the meaning and intention of the original writers and the meaning and intention which we, in the exercise of our liberty, choose, for our own spiritual purpose, to give to their words. Very often Israel will, for us, mean humanity, just as, in our adaptation of the old liturgy for our modern use, we shall often definitely add the word "mankind" to the word "Israel." Often, too, the material Jerusalem and the re-establishment of the Jewish state will for us mean the spiritual Jerusalem and the diffusion of the knowledge of God throughout the world. The Messianic hope we shall interpret in a purely religious, ethical and catholic manner. With such an interpretation the particularist and national troubles will fade away. Nor will the connection with the past be too unduly broken. For the real religious significance of the Messianic promises is not what may materially and physically happen to a particular people, but what religiously and ethically is to be the future of the world. "And the Lord shall be King over all the earth: in that day the Lord shall be One and his name One."

It is unnecessary to deal in detail with the Pentateuchal ceremonies which affect the private life of the individual. As regards the dietary laws I have nothing to add to, or subtract from, what I have already said in previous writings. I imagine that the observance of them in Liberal-Jewish households

is bound to disappear. For they belong to a class of religious customs which have nothing specifically Jewish about them. Food taboos are common to dozens of tribes all over the world. Nor can it be said that, at their origin, they start high up in the development of religion. It is not in them that we can perceive the divine element in the Pentateuchal legislation. The same may be said of circumcision. It is a rite which depends upon very old ideas, and it is found in one form or another among many different races. The story of its first introduction and injunction cannot now be regarded as strictly historical. Nevertheless, Liberal Jewish congregations do well, I think, in temporarily retaining this unattractive rite for infants, while gladly abandoning it for adult proselytes. The reason for this retention is not religious, and it is not hygienic. So far as the custom is hygienic, it can be performed, when desirable, by a non-Jewish doctor and without any ceremonial appurtenances. But the rite may justifiably be temporarily retained for reasons of a social and juridical order. If all Jews were Liberal Jews, it would be different. But while so many are not, it is not desirable that any Liberal Jews should be under any religious disqualification or stigma in the eyes of their orthodox brethren. That might lead to difficulties in the case of a contemplated marriage between a "Liberal" Jew and an "Orthodox" Jewess.

Thus none of the various "troubles," enumerated at the opening of this chapter, seem insuperable either to the existence and continuance of Liberal Judaism as a separate religion, or to the special place to be justly assigned in that religion to the Old Testament Scriptures.

It is true that the results of criticism make the

history of Israel something very different from what it used to be regarded in the days of old. Abraham, Isaac and Jacob are no longer historical figures like David or Ezra or Judas the Maccabee. The events of which they are the heroes probably never took place. Moses is an historical personage, but the true story of his life and doings can hardly be recovered. The entrance into, and the departure from, Egypt did not take place in the manner in which they are described in Genesis and Exodus. The Laws of the Pentateuch were not dictated by God to Moses. The institution of the Passover only gradually assumed its present shape: the ordinances concerning it belong to different eras; they combine rules about two different festivals which are only artificially united together. And so we might go on. But great as the difference is between such views of the Pentateuch and the views of orthodoxy, the difference is not great enough to destroy Liberal Judaism. For the big unalterable facts remain. Here are the Jews to-day. Here is the Old Testament. Here are the religious verities (as we believe) contained therein. Does it really matter that these verities are associated with these inaccuracies? Do the verities become thereby less true, less valuable, less worth possessing? Surely not. Is it more difficult to believe that the Jews have had, or have, any special religious vocation or mission, because the story of their early history is full of statements and legends of miracles and supernatural events, in which we no longer believe? The real significance of the mission lies in the *doctrines* which the Jews have produced and developed, and not in the accuracy of the stories of their early history and first progenitors. "Ye are my witnesses." I can believe this, if I can believe and hold high

those *doctrines*, if I can interpret the whole course of Jewish history as in accordance and congruity with the assertion, if I can believe that the God whom the prophets proclaimed is the God who rules the world, and controls the destinies of mankind. I am not perturbed in, or driven from, my belief because of the legends and miracles of the Pentateuch. God uses human means, and works with imperfect materials. The legends and the miracles, however inaccurate and untrue, do not make me believe any the less that Israel was chosen by God for a religious purpose. Why there is dross in the ore, why there is falsehood amid the truth, why there was and is a slow growth and development instead of sudden and complete revelation, I do not fully understand. All imperfection represents a problem. But I interpret the history and the record not by the falsehoods, but by the truths, not by the lowest, but by the highest. They vouch for their own divineness ; nor do the legends and the miracles suffice to make the high less high, or the true less true. Precisely the same argument holds of the moral difficulty as well. The permanent is not invalidated by the transitory : the gold is not destroyed by the dross. It is for us to distinguish and to separate, but it is not for us to reject the good because we discover the imperfect, or to deny the divine because we recognise the human. So, too, with inspiration. You cannot make any book, or part of a book, more inspired by declaring it to be so. Its inspiration can only be deduced from its contents. The inspiration of the Bible and its divineness must be inferred from the great teachings which it contains. You cannot show that the teachings are great and true because it is inspired. You can only show that it is inspired because the teachings

are great and true. And when criticism has done its worst and its best—for criticism reveals the true greatness of the Old Testament at least as much as it produces difficulties to solve—there remains enough of what is great and true in the Old Testament to justify the verdict that this book, if any book, may be rightly called holy and inspired.

But if the Hebrew Bible thus retains for us Liberal Jews its position of religious pre-eminence, does it also retain for us its authority? We may bow down in reverent homage before its sublimest utterances about God and goodness, but can we yield submission to it as regards the ordering of our lives? Can we regulate our religious institutions, our worship, our public and private expression and manifestation of religion, upon its laws and its ordinances? Here we have the ceremonial trouble making its reappearance from another point of view. We have frequently emphasised the greatness and permanent significance of the Prophets and the Psalter. But what of the Law, from which, rather than from Psalter or Prophets, have issued the form and shaping of Jewish life?

Yet even in Liberal Judaism the Law can occupy a peculiar place. For though Liberal Judaism is far less than orthodox Judaism a legal religion, and though we can no longer say, "*Because* a certain injunction is found in the Law, therefore I fulfil it," yet even for us the Law has a position of significance and of honour. In the first place, though Liberal Judaism could not for a moment adhere to the articles about the Law in the Maimonidean Creed, it may, nevertheless, in a certain sense be regarded as a religion of Law. Of Law, be it observed, without the article. While we no longer regard the

Pentateuch as the supreme word of God, and no longer accept all its commandments as perfect, immutable and true, we still accept the principle of Law, we still hold that only through law, and in law, can man upon earth win and maintain his freedom.

Goethe spoke about art, but we apply his golden words to morality, and say with him, "Und das Gesetz nur kann uns Freiheit geben"—"Only law can give us freedom." I cannot here pursue this matter further, but if I am right in my assertion, our championship of Law in religion—our sense of free obligation to the majesty and compelling force of the Highest—enables us to retain for the Pentateuch something of its old position of prominence, if not of superiority. We still hold to the words, "Thou shalt." We still recognise duty and the constraint of duty: as free men we freely choose to obey: we dare not, we must not,—for our highest self is one with the Moral Law—refuse the call or deny the obligation. If the Psalter, somewhat fancifully, may represent for us that quality of God—shall we say His immanence?—by which we commune with Him, by which we recognise His presence within us, the Law will represent that quality of God—shall we say His transcendence?—by which we bow down before Him as the Holy and the Perfect One, other than and separate from ourselves. He is the Source and Consummation of Goodness: He is the fount and well of that Law in obedience to which is the only true liberty. But in Him alone is liberty identical with law. In Him alone is perfect freedom perfect law. Just as the injunction runs, "Be ye holy even as God is holy," so might the injunction run, "Obey yourselves, even

as God obeys Himself," or "Be ye free, even as God is free." But just as man, whether in this life or in another, can never be as holy as God, so can he never be so self-obedient as God, or so free as God. The moral law is, indeed, in a double sense *his* law. It is his law because man (with God's help and will, with that reason of his which, in Biblical language, is God's image and itself divine) creates and increasingly apprehends it: it is also man's law because by free obedience to it, and only thus, does he realise his highest nature and his true end.

The moral law, as his law, is within him. But though within man, it is also without man, and it is not only man's law, but it is also God's law. For God is its ultimate author; God is its justification and its guarantee. Man has to learn to obey it freely, but he has also to recognise that he *ought* to obey, that he must obey, that the Law, though in it his true self be realised, is yet immeasurably greater and holier than he. The Pentateuch represents for us this majestic compulsion, which never ceases, though its ideal is freedom. The Pentateuch represents for us this Law, the fulfilment of which is no burden, but a joy, which the better it is fulfilled, the freer we become, which the more it is realised to be without and divine, the more it is also realised to be human and within. Thus, even from this point of view alone, we are ready to place the sacred scroll within the arks of our Synagogues, and to read from it week by week upon the Sabbath Day. *The* Law is the symbol of Law.

And even that is not all. The Pentateuch contains the watchword of our faith, the confession of the Divine Unity; it contains the Ten Commandments, it contains the injunction to love God with

all our might; to love neighbour and stranger as ourselves. We need not greatly mind if its codes also include much which is obsolete, or not in accordance with our present conceptions of morality and of religion. It is enough that it contains the very foundations of our Theism and of our social and moral order. The proclamation of the Divine Unity and Goodness, the principles of justice and of compassion, the ideals of the love of man and the love of God, suffice. We can ignore the obsolete, and exalt the permanent. And if the Pentateuch enjoins us to observe the Feast of Passover and the Feast of Weeks, why need we have any scruple to make, and to retain, a festival for Liberty, upon the one hand, and for Law, upon the other?

It is true that the authority of the Hebrew Bible is not the same authority to us as it is to our orthodox brethren. The Sabbath is not to us a splendid institution *because* it is ordered in the Ten Commandments. The law, "Thou shalt love the stranger as thyself," is not to us good and inspired *because* it is in the Pentateuch. It is inspired because it is good, and it is good because our conscience acclaims it. Nevertheless, this very conscience is itself the partial outcome of the Pentateuch and the Hebrew Bible. We are what we are partly because of them. The Old Testament, for us especially, is bone of our bone. It is, in a sense, our charter; inextricably mixed up with our history and our destiny. Its authority is, therefore, to *us* greater than it can be to *others*. But it is an authority which is reasonable and historic; we freely accept it; we recognise and define its extent and its limitations. It is an authority which depends, first, upon the contents of the book, secondly, upon the part

which it has played in our history and development. We could not admit the force of the second reason, if it were not for the first. If the book were not a supremely great book, the part which it has played in the past would not affect and bind us in the present. And if the book were merely a great and noble book, it would not control and constrain us, if it were not also *our* book, if it had not its historical relation to us, if we were not, in part, creatures of its influence. It is the combination of the two reasons which gives to it its place, not only in our hearts, but in our lives: it is this combination which, if any prediction be safe, will unite Liberal Judaism and the Hebrew Bible for distant ages inseparably together.

NOTE

The reference on p. 64 is to the very important little book: *Richtlinien zu einem Programm für das liberale Judentum, nebst den Referaten und Ansprachen auf den Rabbinerversammlungen zu Berlin und Frankfurt am Main und auf der Delegiertenversammlung der Vereinigung für das liberale Judentum zu Posen* (p. 57). 1912.

II

LIBERAL JUDAISM AND THE NEW TESTAMENT

It may be asked whether the title of this chapter is well chosen, and what is its justification? Liberal Judaism and the Old Testament seems a reasonable collocation. It seems obviously reasonable, in other words, that Liberal Judaism should have something special to say about, should take up some special attitude towards, the Hebrew Scriptures. But why should there be this special attitude towards the New Testament? Take another book sacred to another religion. Judaism and the Koran might be a reasonable title for an essay, but *Liberal* Judaism and the Koran would scarcely seem so.

Well, to begin with, Liberal Judaism must *have* an attitude, must *think out* its attitude, towards all products of religion. It must, therefore, have an attitude even towards the Koran! It may well be that this attitude will, in many respects, be precisely the same attitude as that of Orthodox Judaism: but that can only be known after Liberal Judaism has thought the matter out for itself.

But, in the second place, the view which Liberal Judaism takes about Revelation and Inspiration

makes it likely that its attitude towards all the other sacred books of the world, over and above the Old Testament, will be different from the attitude of Orthodoxy. For Orthodox Judaism can hardly allow that any aspect of religious truth is contained in any other sacred book, which is not contained, or not so fully or plainly presented, in the Old Testament and the Talmud. But Liberal Judaism does not believe that God has enabled the human race to reach forward to religious truth so exclusively through a single channel.

I venture to think that there is also a "thirdly," though I mention it with hesitation, and my first and second reasons are ample justifications for my title. My "thirdly," however, is this. There is some reason, I hope, to believe that Liberal Jews are less prejudiced about the New Testament than Orthodox Jews, and that Liberal Judaism can, therefore, enquire into this matter more quietly and impartially, and reach less wooden and less one-sided conclusions.

If the mere title of this chapter is justified, I hope that its importance will also be conceded—at least for the Jews of Europe and of America. I do not say that the subject would be anything like so important for the Jews of China, or Morocco, or Persia. But for us who live in a Christian environment, and amid a civilisation which has been partially created by the New Testament, our right relation towards it must surely be of grave and peculiar importance. For this civilisation is also ours. The literature, which is soaked through and through with New Testament influences, is also *our* literature. The thought, which has been partially produced by the New Testament, is the thought amid which we

are reared, which we absorb, to which we react. From every side, from every point of view, our attitude towards the New Testament is pressed upon us for consideration and settlement.

Looking at the matter in a purely religious light, we are driven to the same conclusion. What immense claims have been set up for this book, and are still set up for it! By Europe and America it is generally regarded as by far the greatest and most original book about religion in all the world. Jews sometimes conveniently forget this very obvious fact. They will go so far as to quote the opinions of notable Christians about the value and greatness of the Bible. But they ignore the fact that for these, as for all Christians, the Bible consists of the New Testament as well as of the Old Testament, and that in the eyes of all Christians the New Testament is the flower of the whole. The world would by no means say the same things about the Old Testament *alone* as it says about the Old Testament and the New Testament *together*. The religious and ethical teaching of the New Testament is, we are told, the greatest and best religious and ethical teaching which the world has ever seen, can see, or will see; and we are also told that this teaching is, in many salient points, highly novel and original. Is it not, then, of importance and of interest to ascertain what the attitude of Liberal Judaism should be towards these gigantic claims? We no longer live, we no longer want to live, in a narrow ghetto with a huge high wall all round us. The very air we breathe, the moral, literary, artistic influences which we suck up from our childhood, are, to a large extent, the same as those which surround and affect our Christian fellow-citizens. We have, then,

—almost in self-defence and preservation, if for no other reason—to define and make good our point of view.

A subsidiary, and yet not unreal, ground for Jewish interest in the New Testament is that it is a book which, in very large part, was written by persons who were born Jews. Its central hero was a Jew. Its teaching is based throughout—sometimes, indeed, by way of opposition—upon the teaching of the Old Testament. It is commonly supposed to contain the continuation, or development, or final consummation, of the religious doctrine which preceded it. If many Jews are peculiarly interested in Spinoza, because, though he entirely broke with Judaism, and though his doctrine wholly departed from the fundamental teachings of the Synagogue, he was yet born a Jew, and his philosophy shows traces, here and there, of Jewish influences, how much more should they be interested in the New Testament, which is so vastly more important a book than the writings of Spinoza, and the hero of which, in his own judgment at any rate, lived and died a Jew by faith, proclaiming always the God of his fathers?

It can hardly be maintained that the Jewish attitude towards the New Testament has always been scientific and impartial. Even in the case of Liberal Jews, though considerable advance and improvement can be noted, we have still not reached a prevailingly adequate point of view. For the lack of impartiality, as well as for the policy of ignoring, there are excellent excuses and explanations. But the excuses and explanations do not alter the fact. They only excuse and explain it.

Now what I have just said might be taken to show that I am myself as unscientific and as partial

as the people whom I condemn. For it might seem to imply that the less you find to admire in the New Testament, the less in it that you acknowledge to be both new and true, the less impartial and scientific you are. But surely *a priori* praise is as unscientific and partial as *a priori* blame. It does not necessarily follow that you have drawn nearer to the truth because your opinion has become more like the opinion of the immense majority.

This objection is fairly reasonable. It is, at any rate, conceivable that the opinion of civilised Europe as regards the value or the excellence of the New Testament is entirely wrong. But, though conceivable, it does not seem to me likely. If any one were to try to prove that Beethoven was a poor musician, and Raphael a poor painter, his views might be conceivably right, and the world might be ultimately converted to his opinion, but though all this is conceivable, it is scarcely likely. Still a majority may possibly be as prejudiced and prepossessed as a minority. We must no more follow a multitude in thinking falsely than in doing wrongly. It is conceivable that, as compared with the Old Testament, there is nothing new in the New Testament which is also true, and nothing true which is new. Perhaps I am too democratic a person, too impressed by numbers, or perhaps I am too aristocratic a person and too impressed by authority, to think that this judgment is probably correct, but it is, at any rate, conceivable, and must not be condemned beforehand. It must be no more condemned beforehand than we must condemn beforehand its precise opposite and antithesis. We can only judge and decide which is correct after careful study and enquiry.

It is also conceivable—and, I think, much more

conceivable—that though the New Testament, as compared with the Old Testament, contains teachings or ideals of life which are both new and true, it does not contain such true novelties or novel truths for the Jews of to-day. In other words, for good or for evil, we are presented with the New Testament many years too late. It is possible that, in their own way, along their own lines, or through their own religious development, the Jews have acquired teachings and ideals of life which, not contained in the Old Testament, are yet contained, in one form or another, in later Jewish literature, and have, without any external or specifically Christian influence, been absorbed into the present Jewish religion. A very simple instance may make my meaning clear. The Old Testament says little or nothing of a blissful life after death. The Gentile world has got its teaching on this subject, not from the Old Testament, but from the New. But the Jew, who to-day believes in a blissful life after death, has not got his belief from the New Testament. He has got it along his own lines and in his own way. Thus certain things which the Gentile to-day holds dear, and which he finds in the New Testament, the Jew holds dear likewise ; he already possesses them, and he finds them, not indeed in the Old Testament, for they are not there, but in later Jewish literature, in later Jewish life. Thus what the Gentile goes for to the New Testament, the Jew goes for to other sources. He has the same needs as the Gentile, and he recognises the same truths : but their expressions and origins, which the Gentile finds collected in one small volume, the Jew, it may be, finds scattered about in many volumes. Yet the result may be conceivably the same.

Thus whatever the Liberal Jew may decide (after due study) as to the moral and religious worth of the New Testament in itself, or in comparison with the Old Testament, alone and isolated from all later Jewish literature, it is not by any means unreasonable that his feeling towards the book should be partially influenced by an historic past which can never be undone or put aside. You cannot subvert or deny your own spiritual ancestry.

I can imagine that a Liberal Jew and a Liberal Unitarian might conceivably take much the same view as to the moral and religious worth of the teachings attributed to Jesus in the three Synoptic Gospels, and nevertheless that the Liberal Jew could never feel towards the New Testament in the same way, or receive from it the same religious emotions, as the Liberal Unitarian. A different past has moulded them, a different allegiance claims them, and even if the judgment of the head should coincide, the feelings of the heart must vary. To the one, his *Bible* is the Old Testament alone, and it is not easy to see how it will ever be a larger Bible; to the other the Bible is the Old and New Testament combined, and it is no less difficult to believe that it will ever be a smaller Bible.

The Orthodox Jew, who regards the Old Testament as the undiluted word of God, accepts its miracles, and the doctrine of verbal inspiration, may conceivably be converted to Christianity, and sometimes he is. He then adds another section to his Bible, and looks at the larger book in much the same way as he looked at the smaller book. But the Liberal Jew, who regards the Old Testament in the manner outlined in the last chapter, is seldom converted to Christianity. That is why the orthodox

Christian conversionists admit that the Liberal Jew is a harder nut to crack than the Orthodox Jew, and why it has been said, for instance, of the present writer that, in spite of all his appreciation of the Gospels, he is hopelessly far removed from the borders of Christianity. The man who has come to perceive the human side of his own scripture is not likely to ignore that side in the scriptures of another faith. And it is one thing, with all his full realisation of the human and imperfect side of his own Bible, to retain it as his sacred book, but it is quite another thing to add to his own Bible another book, human and imperfect too. The Liberal Jew who rejects the miracles of the Old Testament will very rarely accept the miracles of the New.

But, then, there is something more. It is a strange fact that progress in religion is also accompanied by retrogression. The Liberal Jew may, perhaps, see certain features of religious advance in the New Testament as compared with the Old, but, on the other hand, he may also find in it certain features of retrogression. Retrogression, that is, from the highest point of religious development attained in the Old Testament.

Thus, for example, we find in the New Testament much about demons and devils; we find, in some parts of it, a dualism which we cordially reject; we find, in parts of it, a pessimism towards the world of earth which we condemn; and then, as Jews, albeit Liberal Jews, we find in it a declension from the purest monotheism of the Old Testament; we find in it the fateful beginnings of the deification of a man.

These things appear to us both off the line of

purest Jewish development and off the line of purest religious truth. It is not necessary to deny that in the full doctrine of the Incarnation, which finally emerges from the basis of the New Testament writings, valuable aspects of truth may be enshrined, but with these aspects—attractive and striking though they be—are mingled and combined other aspects (as we believe) of retrogression and of error.

It is true that in the Old Testament, and not only in the oldest bits of it, there are doctrines, or strands of doctrine, which we reject, which we regard as obsolete and erroneous, but these things in our own Bible we take, as the Germans would say, *mit im Kauf*, as part of the property which we have inherited. But if we are asked to acquire another property with such or other imperfections, they stare us in the face, and are obnoxious to us in a very different, and much more hampering, way. We keep and love the old inheritance, imperfect though, as a whole, it be, but when it is a question of adding to it some other adjoining acres, imperfect too, though in a different way, our critical faculties are too strongly aroused. We cannot put the purchase through.

If all this be so, and if Liberal Judaism cannot, any more than Orthodox Judaism, incorporate the New Testament into its Bible, does that mean that it has no use for it whatever? Because it finds in it errors and retrogressions, can it not also see advances and truths? Is all that is good necessarily old and stale? Or is no old truth newly and strikingly put? Is there nothing in the character and story of the central hero to edify and to admire? Is it not a foolish judgment, and a very uncritical judgment to boot, which would reject good and evil alike, false and true?

I emphasise the possibility of old truths freshly and strikingly put, for I believe that we have here one of the most important uses to which, from a Jewish point of view, the New Testament can be put. Take, for instance, some of the great Parables in the Synoptic Gospels. Let us, for example, recall the parable of the Good Samaritan. The teaching is not wholly new, but it is freshly and strikingly put. Or take the parable of the Prodigal Son. The teaching is certainly not new, but it is freshly and strikingly put: it is illuminating, unforgettable. It may be (as a great American Jewish scholar with consummate learning has brilliantly argued) that some notable sayings in the New Testament were current coin of the time, or already existed in Jewish writings which have now disappeared.[1] It matters not. It suffices for us to-day that we have them *now* only in this particular place. It may be that it was by no means a new collocation to bring together the love of God and the love of man as the two greatest Commandments of the Law. Never mind. The fact remains that we *have* them brought together in words of striking simplicity and power in the pages of the Gospels. Shall we admire, and cherish, and learn from, these exquisite stories, or shall we sniff and sneer at them and pass them by?

Or, again, it may be that certain truths or teachings, which are more on the periphery in the Old Testament, may chance in the New Testament to be found in the centre. What is incidental in the one book may be prominent in the other. For instance, the sin of self-righteousness is more incidentally condemned, or less searchingly analysed,

[1] Dr. J. Kohler in various articles in the *Jewish Encyclopaedia* and elsewhere.

in the Old Testament than in the New. Thus a parable like the Pharisee and the Tax-Collector, which we should be foolish to neglect just because the bad man is the Pharisee, is of importance and value to us, not merely because an old truth is freshly and strikingly put, but because it is centralised, made prominent, intensified and deepened.

Or, again, a truth in the one book may be developed in the other. A step further may be taken in moral excellence. That God loves the repentant sinner is a familiar Old Testament doctrine, that man should *search out* and *cause* the sinner to repent by the compulsion of love, adds a new touch, a new truth, a new moral ideal. "Rejoice with me, for I have found my sheep which was lost." That is a novel note in the history of morality, and yet one that fitted in with perfect propriety to the line of the older teaching.

Now if it be a fact that—quite apart from the question whether it contains thoughts and ideals that are both new and true—the New Testament does, at any rate, contain many old truths freshly and strikingly put, and that some notable periphery teachings are brought into the centre, with the light of genius flashed upon them, it is hardly wise to neglect such a work too prevailingly, or to cheapen and condemn it. It would be a special pity, and an added loss, if Liberal Jews were to depreciate any aspects of truth because such aspects have become central in the New Testament. If the alleged truths are false, by all means depreciate and ignore them: but if they are real, we neglect them at our peril. "Rejoice with me, for I have found my sheep which was lost." Are we, for instance, to neglect the religious impulse and driving force

contained in this parable and in the ideal which underlies it?

The New Testament fills few pages of print, and is easily accessible, and is first-class literature. The Synoptic Gospels are works of genius, and in our vernacular translation are written in superb and inimitable English. If they contain nothing but error and retrogression, they are all the more dangerous, and should be all the more heartily shunned, but if together with error and retrogression, there is truth, shall we not make use of the truth, while duly pointing out the errors? It may indeed be said—and with much force—that we are not limited to the Old Testament, but that we have the vast corpus of the Apocryphal, the Talmudical and the Midrashic literature to draw from as well. By all means. I fully admit that in these immense literatures there is a good deal which, as compared with the Old Testament, is new and true, much old which is freshly and strikingly put, and also some old things which are made more central or are powerfully emphasised. By all means let us use them. My complaint against the Jewish scholars is rather that they have not adequately enabled us to handle and possess these excellences, that the light of them is still too much hidden beneath the weight of tedious and inaccessible bushels. Assuming, however, that we could get hold of these admirable additions to the Old Testament, it may still be said that two good things are better than one. Moreover, I know enough about these plums from the Rabbinical literature to be able to say that they suffer from certain deficiencies. They are somewhat atomistic and disconnected: they are not exquisite in form: they are rarely the product of impassioned enthusiasm and genius. Let us not neglect them:

let us use them all we can. But it may be doubted —even though, in essence, they closely resembled the plums of the Gospels—whether they could enable us to dispense with their competitors. It may be doubted whether they would have the same driving force and thrilling power. Nor have the Jewish scholars as yet made them widely accessible and extremely inexpensive! In the last resort I believe that each set of excellences has its own special *nuance* of worth, its own peculiar aroma of value. Both come from Jewish sources, both spring from Jewish lips. It seems quite foolish to neglect the good that may be obtained both from the one and from the other. And so far as both are good and true, both are the gift of the Author of Goodness and the Source of Truth.

Nevertheless, for very many reasons, I should be quite against the use of the New Testament in our public worship. It is true that the Old Testament, large as it is, yet contains a great deal which is of no present religious value or of uplifting power to the average worshipper. Those of us who have had to choose chapters for public reading know how frequently we have to recur to the same selections from Isaiah. Much of the Old Testament is purely historical, much is so very difficult that it needs a commentary, much is so mixed up with the circumstances of the age in which it was composed that for our modern liturgical purposes it is of small avail. Much has to do with subjects that are now obsolete. The stories of Genesis are exquisite stories, but we often feel, when they are read out loud, that we need something more adult and gripping, something nearer to the centre of religion and morality. The Sayings of Proverbs are excellent in their way, but we often

feel that we want something more inspiring, enkindling, provoking. Yet though, for these various reasons, later Jewish literature, if Jewish scholars were not so slack, might often be called into use, I do not think, so far as public worship is concerned, that we can employ the New Testament to supplement the deficiencies of the Old. There are doubtless several passages in the Synoptic Gospels, and a few in the Epistles, which could be detached from their environment, and with very small omissions or even with none, could be used without any violation of Jewish sentiment or Jewish faith. And these passages would supply some of the qualities we need. They would deal with central problems ; they would be gripping, adult and inspiring. They would arrest the attention and stimulate religious emotion in a high degree. But, nevertheless, it is better to forgo their advantages. For the great mass of the New Testament literature is shot through and through with conceptions that sunder it off from any phase and form of Judaism, and make it obviously unusable in the public worship of the Synagogue. And these sundering conceptions are vital and fundamental to the New Testament writings. The conception of Jesus, not only as the Messiah, but as a divine being, is of the very essence of Paul's theology, and immanent in almost every chapter of the Epistles. Even in the Synoptic Gospels the conception of Jesus as the supreme Master, the ultimate Authority, the new and final Revealer of the divine will, is so frequently prominent as to make it difficult to subtract this conception from the majority of the chapters without violating all the canons of literary and historical good faith. That personal note in the Teacher, which differentiates him from the prophets, with whom in many

respects he is so closely and vitally connected, is what underlies and fashions the difference between the most unorthodox of Christians and the most liberal of Jews. To that personal note the Christian responds in glad homage and willing acceptance: reverently he confesses: "Here speaks my Master and my Lord." But from the Jew that personal note, while historically interesting, wrings no homage. Master and Lord are terms which he will use of God alone; he preserves his critical faculty before the words of Jesus no less than before the words of Hosea. Some he admires and approves; some he would modify; a few he would entirely reject.

It does not, however, follow that, because the New Testament is unsuited for use in the synagogue worship, it should be totally neglected. In the higher grades and classes of the religious school it should, I think, be discussed and dealt with in a truly judicial spirit—not merely showing to the pupils where it is unacceptable to Jewish opinion and, in Jewish eyes, erroneous, but also where it is in harmony with Jewish doctrine, and where it carries forward, or nobly exemplifies and illustrates, important elements of the Jewish faith. I would show them what to admire and to cherish, as well as what to reject and to condemn. And I would also seek to show them—most delicate and difficult task of all—where the true and the false are closely collocated and even woven together. I would not fear to tell them—girls and boys of fifteen and sixteen—where there seems development, just as I would not hide from them where there seems to be retrogression.

The manner in which Liberal Judaism regards the conception of Inspiration makes it easier for us to deal with the complicated problem of the New

Testament. For we no longer say of the Old Testament: "This book is inspired through and through, and no other book is inspired at all. This book is of one kind; all other books are of a totally different kind." We do not divide the Bibles of the world into two unequal bundles, calling the small bundle, "the only *true* sacred book of the world," and calling the large bundle, "all the *false* sacred books of the world." Truth and falsehood are no longer so rigidly and unequally distributed, and inspiration also is no longer confined to our own Scriptures. If, then, inspiration extends beyond the confines of the Old Testament, shall we be willing to admit its existence in the Koran or in some Buddhist scripture, but refuse to recognise it in the Gospels? That is impossible. It is no longer possible to say, "Because there is error and retrogression in this book, therefore it is not inspired." For we no longer believe that any book is wholly errorless. Isaiah is inspired, yet there are many things in Isaiah which we consider erroneous to-day. Inspiration can be claimed for, and must be allotted to, the New Testament, first, because of the true and great things which it contains, secondly, because of the effect of these true and great things for good. Indeed one can hardly believe in a ruling Deity without also believing that those things which have produced great good, even though they have also produced some evil, did not come into being without the will and the inspiration of God.

I am not prepared to measure degrees. Whether the Sermon on the Mount is more inspired than the Proverbs or the Psalms, I will not estimate or discuss. We need not bother our own, or our children's, heads with these tricky and unnecessary

questions. It is sufficient for our purpose if we are ready to recognise in many passages of the New Testament noble ethical and religious teaching, supplementary and complementary to the noble ethical and religious teaching of the Old Testament, and to admit that, in the one case as in the other, the nobility finds its ultimate source in God.

Nor is this recognition dependent upon the vexed question of originality. It seems to be held by many Jewish writers that if a certain saying in the New Testament can be paralleled by a saying of the same sort in the Old Testament or the Rabbinical literature, that saying may forthwith be neglected. It is no longer original. We have, however, already seen that the greatness and inspiration of a New Testament passage do not depend upon its being wholly unparalleled. They depend upon its position of importance, upon its stress, upon its form and passion, upon its relation to, and its place in, the teaching as a whole, upon its ultimate effect upon the world. Thus the New Testament would not lose in greatness, in importance, or in inspiration, if splitting it atomistically into sentences, you could find for every good sentence a Rabbinic parallel, or if you could prove (which you *very* rarely can) that, in each separate instance, the Rabbinic parallel was earlier than the New Testament sentence. As a matter of fact, so far as the Rabbinic parallels are concerned, they are usually a good deal later. But even if you fish up earlier parallels from the Testaments of the Patriarchs, or if you infer the existence of earlier parallels from the Didascalia, originality in date does not settle the question. Over and above originality in date is originality as regards the world, or the originality of fulness and centrality as against

the originality of casual utterance and periphery. You may fish up a few sentences from the Testaments or from Philo, and we shall honour the authors and admire the sentences, but the question remains whether the thought of the sentences has entered into the world's spiritual consciousness through the Testaments or through the Gospels, through Philo or through Paul. And the question remains whether the thought is central and burning in the New Testament, and only incidental and exceptional in the parallels. Luther keeps his place, though he had his precursors; Darwin maintains his position, though there were many adumbrations and anticipations of his theories.

It is, however, necessary to pass now from sheer generalities to details. What teaching, it may be asked, is there in the New Testament to move our admiration? What features or parts of that teaching fit in with, and carry forward, valuable elements of Old Testament doctrine? What supplements? What develops? What corrects? We may, for our purposes, divide up the New Testament into three portions, the Synoptic Gospels, the Fourth Gospel with the Johannine Epistles, and the Epistles of Paul. And first, then, as to the Synoptics, which contain, so far as any books could or do, the record of the teaching of the historic Jesus.

We shall justly note, to begin with, that portion of the teaching which seems to take up again, or to connect with, the salient doctrine of the Old Testament prophets, the doctrine which was so inimitably expressed in the burning words of Hosea, "I desire mercy and not sacrifice, the knowledge of God more than burnt-offerings." Yet it does not follow that the teaching of Jesus, noble though it be, needs no supplementing, or that it is not, regarded in isolation,

one-sided. But just because it looks so intently upon certain great aspects of religion and morality, it possesses the acute capacity to stimulate, to fortify, and to console. It may, because of a certain one-sidedness, succeed where a cooler, more balanced teaching would fail. But the Jewish reader, in order to allow the passion and grandeur of the Gospel teaching to produce their full moral and emotional effect upon his mind and soul, must, for the time being, forget the historical environment and all questions of historic justice. He must not ask (as for historic and critical purposes he must undoubtedly do), Does this passage, or the setting of this particular teaching, do justice to the Pharisee? Does it represent the antagonists of Jesus, the representatives of Rabbinic orthodoxy, in a false or unfair light? To realise the full force of the teaching he must take the words "Scribe" and "Pharisee" in a conventional sense. He must regard them as mere names for a particular type of character which is contrasted with a particular ideal. They are the foils; they are the darkness which sets off the light.

Thus when we read the stories about Sabbath observance, we must use and apply these stories as we use and apply the great sayings of the Prophets. And if we do that, we shall feel their fervour and catch their spirit. Or again when we read the saying, "There is nothing outside a man which, entering into him, can make him unclean; but the things which come out of a man, *these* are what make him unclean," we must not immediately consider what have been the disciplinary effects of the Jewish dietary laws, or what is the effect—scientifically and physiologically considered—of foods upon character, or whether gluttony and drunken-

ness are not evils, or whether regard for health is not a moral duty, but we must take the saying as a great pronouncement of inward or spiritual religion, or as a great liberating word against formalism and superstition. It will then take its place along with Hosea's dictum, "I desire mercy and not sacrifice." If Jesus denounces those who cleanse only the outside of the cup, who pay tithe from mint and cummin, and neglect justice and the love of God, we are not at once, or merely, to ask, was this true of those about whom it was alleged, but we are to take it as a warning against certain types of hard outward respectability, and of inadequate and conventional morality, which culminate in self-righteousness and hypocrisy.

So too with the wonderful Parable of the Pharisee and the Tax-Collector. We must not take these contrasted figures as photographs of typical Tax-Collectors and typical Pharisees. We must put the question of historic fact entirely aside : we must allow the Pharisee and the Tax-Collector to be mere names without significance. So reading the parable, we can hardly fail to be impressed with its trenchant plea for inwardness. It connects with the old teaching : "The Lord looketh to the heart." It supplies a necessary corrective to any religion of law, or rather it shows us that the true service of the moral law is far removed from outward legality. A man's conduct may be outwardly correct, but his character may be inwardly rotten ; a man's conduct may have been disfigured with sins, but he may yet possess a certain yearning for redemption, even if only occasionally realised, which in its humility and sincerity may enable him to draw near unto God. The correct and self-righteous formalist is in the

same position of danger as the man who thinks he knows, but is really ignorant. The humble ignoramus and the repentant sinner are at least free from self-deception and from pride.

Jesus, then, is the great teacher of inwardness. He resumes the prophetic rôle. And he does so at a period when it was very difficult to take up this rôle without bringing himself into conflict with established authorities. Herein consist, to some extent, the peculiarity of his position, and also, in some ways, its pathos. Hosea and Isaiah were more easily placed. In their times there was no recognised code of Mosaic Law, regarded as the undiluted word of God. There was no inspired and perfect Pentateuch in existence. The Prophets of the eighth century lived long before "the Law," as Jesus knew it, or as we know it, had been compiled. And Jesus had no theoretic views about inspiration: he knew nothing about the history of the Law. To him, too, as to all his contemporaries and as to the Rabbis of his day, the Law was "Mosaic" and inspired. And yet even more assuredly inspired than the written code was the teaching which welled up from the deepest convictions of his heart, or was the doctrine of Hosea, "I desire mercy and not sacrifice." Hence the conflict: hence the weaving of the knot: hence the tragedy.

Meanwhile, we, who are raised above the combatants and the dispute, and who understand and know the genesis of the Law, who can distinguish between its parts, perceiving and assessing its "human" and its "divine" elements in a manner which was impossible either to Jesus or the Rabbis, can appropriate whatever we please from the teaching of both. The "inwardness" of Jesus connects itself with the

inwardness of the Prophets without on that account compelling us to throw over the Law. We shall still observe the Day of Atonement, and many of us will "fast," but the true fast is paradoxically described for us both in the fifty-eighth chapter of Isaiah and in the Sermon on the Mount (Matthew vi. 16-18). Not less valuable for us and helpful is its teaching about Prayer. Yet we shall not hold public worship in less esteem because of it (*Ibid.* vi. 5-13).

Jesus rightly attempts to seek for the roots of goodness or evil in the heart or soul or mind. He wants to cure the guilty disposition: he wants to show us that we have not only to think of the deed, but also of the motive and the desire. Not only is there nothing anti-Jewish in this, but there is even nothing anti-Rabbinic. But the teaching of Jesus is contained in sayings of striking power, and it would be foolish to ignore it. Thus the doctrine, "Whoever looks on a woman to lust after her has committed adultery with her already in his heart," connects easily with Job xxxi. 1 and with Rabbinic sayings as well. Jesus does not say a new thing, be it conceded; but he says a true old thing with concentrated power and passion. The parable of the widow's mite teaches nothing more than a well-known and notable saying in the Talmud. Why may we not, however, have *both*? Why may we not grow up familiar with both? More contentious are the stories and discussions about the Sabbath and its observance. Dialectically, as it seems to me, Jesus fails. But a deeper principle is at stake. It would not have mattered if the "cure" had been postponed for twenty-four hours at the very most. This retort to Jesus was obvious

and convincing. But "the Sabbath was made for man, not man for the Sabbath." This Jesus perceived, as a later Rabbi perceived it likewise. But Jesus, though he could not fully express it, saw something more. He saw that man must interpret the "outward" law so as not to conflict with the "inner" law; the "ceremonial" law so as not to conflict with the "moral" law. He saw that there is only one final law which we may express thus: "Do the right thing when *all* the circumstances of the case are taken into account." That may mean the maintenance, or it may mean the violation, of any particular ordinance. Jesus was feeling his way towards that true freedom which emancipates us from the code only to bind us the more closely to the Law of highest Duty and to the Love of God. That is the value to *us* of these Sabbath stories, and that is their meaning.

The next element of value which we may note in the teaching of Jesus can also be connected with his prophetic rôle: I mean, its fire, its passion, its enthusiasm, its tremendous thoroughness. We may observe this element expressed in various aspects and directions.

In one aspect it has sometimes been criticised as if it were a sort of refined selfishness. Jesus *seems* to speak as if the one great object of every individual were, and should be, to save his soul,—to avoid "hell," and to obtain "heaven." And it is true that he *does* speak like this. Nor is the teaching false. Clearly if, as the result of your short earthly life, your future life for all eternity is irrevocably determined, either for supreme good and felicity, or for supreme evil and unhappiness, it were surely folly not to look at this life very largely from the point of view of the

next. That is entirely logical. But though Jesus does definitely take this line, he means more by saving one's soul than the acquisition of happiness or misery in the future. The life which leads to heaven and happiness is supremely good in itself: the life which leads to hell and misery is supremely evil. The one life is living near to God; the other life is being progressively estranged from Him. It is, therefore, not mere selfishness and wise investment when Jesus urges men to lose their life in order to gain it, to make any sacrifice for the sake of righteousness. It is not selfishness, first, because, as we shall emphasise in a moment, the higher life can only be gained by *un*selfishness, next because the higher life is not mere constant and enduring felicity, but is noble in itself, because it is the life which God desires us to live, the life through which we learn to know Him. Hence this passion for the obtainment of heaven and the avoidance of hell may be more justly represented as the passion for living the *true* life of man, the passion for the highest righteousness, the passion to quench low desires and to enkindle the purest love. It does not mean anything different from the simple injunctions, "Seek good and not evil," "Be ye holy even as God is holy"; but it urges us to be good and holy with a peculiar force, an immense enthusiasm and ardour. Nothing is to stand in the way of the highest. There must be no paltering and no compromise. For the sake of the pearl of high price every lower consideration must be regarded as of no account. If any temptation or thwarting desire—a lust of the eye or of the flesh—stand in the way, it must be ruthlessly cut down. There must be no looking back upon the road; there must be no half measures and no faltering.

But there was another point about this highest life, which Jesus put prominently in the foreground. And it is a point of great originality. This life of supreme devotion for supremest gain must be one of pain and self-denial. "If any man would walk after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily and follow me."

It is this touch of passion and extravagance, manifested in a score of different ways in the teaching of Jesus (as, for instance, in the love of enemy, in non-resistance, in unqualified forgiveness, in "selling all," in "hating" one's nearest and dearest, in complete self-surrender and so on), which has most provoked the criticism of Jewish thinkers, who regard it as one-sided, exaggerated, impracticable, the morality of angels, they tell us, and not of men. Nevertheless, it is the element and the touch which most of all have stirred to deeds of mercy and devotion, and wrought the most varied exhibitions of self-sacrifice and self-denial. This touch may not be literally applicable to, or translatable in, the everyday life of ordinary and average mortality, but it does not necessarily follow that even to that everyday life it cannot impart a certain transfiguration and stimulus. It is the doctrine of All for the Highest. It is the doctrine which, as we have seen, rejecting all compromises and half measures, declares that the one duty of man is to search for the Kingdom of God. If looked at in this light, it is little better than a caricature to represent the doctrine as a refined selfishness, as if it was nothing more than a burning ardour for acquiring heaven and avoiding hell. Far more justly might it be called the doctrine of service, of whole-hearted devotion to the cause of righteousness and the cause of God.

The words I have just quoted: "If any man would walk after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily and follow me," are solemn, uncompromising, momentous. But surely not un-Jewish or inhuman. Self-denial, self-sacrifice. Unless the fifty-third chapter of Isaiah is un-Jewish, self-sacrifice is a Jewish virtue. But it can hardly be gainsaid that it is only with the Gospels that self-sacrifice and self-denial make their more permanent and explicit appearance among the high moral ideals of the world.

What do they imply? What do they demand? I admit that they imply and demand complete self-surrender, complete abandonment of all relations and bonds which would, or which may, hinder a man from absolute devotion to the one cause—the cause of humanity, of righteousness, of the divine Kingdom—call it by what name you will. This overmastering and overwhelming claim of the Highest, which admits of nothing beside it or along with it, is, moreover, expressed and illustrated in the Gospels in two ways, both of which are unsympathetic to Jewish sentiment, and both of which appear subversive of all organised social life. The first of these is the apparent, and, perhaps, the real, demand for poverty. Jewish ethics would, I suppose, say, "use property well," but do *not* give it all away. Jesus seems to say, Abandon everything. "Every one of you that renounces not all his possessions cannot be my disciple." Whether these words are to be explained as due to the special occasion, and intended only for those who aspired to full and complete discipleship, need not here be discussed. What is, however, in any case true is that Jesus does demand a sitting loose to, a detachment from, all material ties, possessions

and obligations, and that he does dwell with emphasis upon the danger of wealth and of the acquisitive impulse or desire. You cannot serve God and Mammon.

The second way in which the demand of self-sacrifice is sometimes expressed wounds Jewish sentiment and Jewish ethics more seriously still. The wound goes deepest in the verse, "If any man hate not his father and mother and wife and children and brothers and sisters and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple." The word "hate" need not be pressed. Even as the soldier of the state has to neglect all family ties and duties, when war is declared, so must the disciple of God, on the same principle, be prepared to sacrifice everything for the sake of the ultimate cause and goal. Like Levi in the Blessing of Moses, he must say to his father and mother, "I have not seen them"; he must refuse to "acknowledge his brothers or to recognise his own children." It is hard for us to conceive how the cause of righteousness and God could possibly involve such a neglect or refusal. Yet we can, at least, imagine such circumstances, occurring not only in war, but in peace. And this tremendous trumpet call, which bids men shrink back from no sacrifice, and draws the limit before neither their dearest possessions nor their life, has been, is, and will surely continue to be, impelling, coercive, sustaining. The voice still rings across the ages. "No man who has put his hand to the plough, and then looks back, is fit for the Kingdom of God." For that Kingdom—in other words the Cause of Righteousness or of God—is to be regarded as like unto a merchant, who seeks for pearls. When he has found one single pearl of greatest price, he sells all that he has and buys it. And who is he who is great in that

Kingdom, and what is the method of obtaining it? And once more the voice rings out, and destroys the possibility of selfishness, as it utters the one word, "Service." Whether Jesus used the phrase "Son of Man" of himself, and what exactly he meant by it, need not here be considered. Nor need we ask whether he claimed to be Messiah, and whether Son of Man and Messiah are for him interchangeable and equivalent terms. But there can be no doubt that the great saying; "The Son of Man came not to be served, but to serve," introduced a new and noble ideal into the religious and moral history of the world. The Messiah, a Servant. Not so had kingship been conceived. The Suffering Servant of the Prophet had not yet been commonly identified, if even, as yet, ever identified at all, with the Messiah. But here boldly, graphically, deliberately proclaimed is the new truth that highest place means fullest service. And even as the function of the Master, so must be the call and the duty of the disciple. "Whoever wishes to be great among you, let him be your servant, and whoever of you would be the first, let him be the slave of all." And—so we may paraphrase the words—whatever is done unto the least of God's children, is done as unto Him.

Is it possible that for these insistent and passionate appeals there is no place in any Jewish heart, or that they can exercise no effect upon any Jewish mind, even though some of them are combined with a personal claim which we cannot recognise, or with a theology which we deny?

It may even be doubted whether we can ignore them with safety. For a morality, devised for "human beings and not for angels," which takes account of human limitations and weaknesses, seems to be a

morality which least of all enables men to overcome their weaknesses and to transcend their limitations. Ideals that can be fulfilled are not ideals at all. A great poet has declared that a man's reach must exceed his grasp. And a great scholar has observed: "To abstain from vice, to cultivate virtue, to fill our station in life with propriety, to bear the ills of life with resignation, and to use its pleasures moderately: these things are indeed not little. . . . Yet the experience of the last age (the eighteenth century) has shown us unmistakably that where this is our best ideal of life . . . it argues a sleek and sordid epicurism, in which religion and a good conscience have their place among the means by which life is to be made comfortable."[1] Even if these words are exaggerated, it is tolerably certain that the finger is here laid upon a real error in the common Jewish criticism upon the moral paradoxes and the spiritual passion of the Gospel teaching. Paradoxes and passion are needed to get out of human nature all of which it is capable. By telling man that he must do what he cannot, you make him do *more* than when you bid him do what he *can*. By arousing his enthusiasm for a supreme ideal you drive him forward upon the road towards it. By kindling within him a passionate love and aspiration for the heights and the pinnacles, he goes forth, neglecting danger, heedless of all lower enticements, glad and eager, upon his arduous quest. Rules of prudence seldom create heroes. It is the extreme, the extravagant, which more frequently produces them. And for many it is the ideal and the paradoxical, expressed in passion and fervour, which lifts them, now and again, out of the average

[1] Essays by Mark Pattison, vol. ii. p. 63. ("Tendencies of Religious Thought in England": this was Pattison's contribution to the famous *Essays and Reviews*, 1860.)

attainment of every day, and making them in love with greatness, enables them sometimes, if not to achieve greatness, yet to attempt, in humble imitation, small and unknown deeds of self-sacrifice and devotion. The impossible ideal transfigures the actual, and stimulates to those struggles which even repeated failure is unable to stifle or to check. For the ideal strengthens as well as ennobles : it impels and it consoles.

That the insistent demand of Jesus to give up life in order to gain it would, in its true application, promote unselfishness, we can discern from the sort of action which he describes as the right and good actions that lead a man to heaven. For our present purpose it matters not whether the great panorama unrolled in the last sixteen verses of the twenty-fifth chapter of Matthew fell from the lips of Jesus or no. They are a portion of the Gospels. Very strangely are mixed up in them doctrine from which we turn in horror, and doctrine to which we look up with admiration. But we can neglect the judgment upon the "goats" with its odious "Depart from me, ye cursed, into the eternal fire which is prepared for the devil and his angels," as an awful aberration, just as in Isaiah we neglect the horrid words, "And their worm shall not die, neither shall their fire be quenched." We concentrate our attention upon the test which secures the admission of the sheep to the Kingdom of blessedness. The test is purely moral, purely "prophetic," in absolute accord with Hosea and Isaiah. The hungry are fed : the thirsty are given drink. The strangers are housed. The naked are clothed. The sick and the prisoners are visited (a true "Rabbinic" touch). Such deeds done unto the least of men are done as unto God. So we may paraphrase.

Social service, then, is the expression of the higher earthly life which secures the blessed eternal life beyond the grave. But there is something more. The passion and enthusiasm of which we spoke as the hall-marks of the Gospel teaching are displayed in the bidding, not merely to help the poor and the suffering when they come your way, but to seek them out, and not merely to help the good, but also the outcast, the pariah and the sinner. Hence it is that all regenerative and redemptive labour and devotion among the Gentile world look back, and look up, to the words and the practice of Jesus as to their source and their stimulus. And justly. This side of his teaching, as this side of his life, are, so far as we know, not merely sublime, but original. The repentance of man and the forgiveness of God had been nobly preached before. And now, in excellent development, comes the demand not to leave the sinner alone to repent if he chooses, but to *cause* him to repent, to work regeneration and the new heart within him by deeds of sympathy or words of love. That is a new note, but assuredly a note which is not antagonistic, but complementary, to what went before. The sick need the physician, and the physic is love—love which may indeed be stern, but even in its sternness is loving. The lesson conveyed by the story of Jesus and the harlot in the seventh chapter of Luke is that love can regenerate the sinful heart. And this in two ways. Love evokes love. The loving sympathy of Jesus evokes in her soul reverential love and gratitude towards him, and his love and her love together are adequate to change her heart, and to effect her redemption. And because her heart is now set Godward, Jesus can say to her, "Thy sins are forgiven." The past is washed away.

In the previous chapter I alluded to that final class of persons to whom Jesus, in the enthusiasm and passion of his pity and his love (which only stop short, with a truly human limitation, at his own critics and antagonists), bids us extend our service and our prayers.[1] "Love your enemies; do good to them that hate you." God "makes his sun to rise on the evil and the good; he sends rain on the just and the unjust" (yes, even, O Jesus, upon the Scribe and the Pharisee, upon the vipers and the children of hell): hence we must imitate God. (But what about the goats and the eternal fire?) To the enemy, too, we must be willing and anxious to render service, even as the Samaritan ministered unto the Jew. And we must act thus, as well for our own sakes as for the enemy's. For our own sakes, because the highest righteousness at which we are to aim must be free from any possible taint of reciprocity or of selfishness. No suspicion of a desired tit for tat. For the enemy's sake, because it is implied, and elsewhere it is explicitly stated, that evil can only be conquered by good, and hatred can only be overcome by love.

With this demand of selfless benevolence may be connected that element in the Gospel teaching, showing itself in many ways and forms, which modifies the old doctrine of proportional retribution or tit for tat. That doctrine has its place and its truths, but there exists, too, another and even higher rule which cuts across it, and this higher rule has on occasion to be observed by man, and is, so we may believe, on occasion observed by God. The Gospel is really *developing* here the Old Testament teaching of the divine justice and the divine compassion. Just as there is not to be a ceaseless tit for tat from man

[1] See Appendix A.

to man—injury requited by injury, and blow answered by blow—so are God's dealings towards man not always on retribution lines. The rules of love are not necessarily the rules of the law court. And this violation of tit for tat may extend not merely to the evil, but also to the good. It is not merely that God forgives, not merely that He causes the sun to shine and the rain to fall for the wicked as well as for the virtuous; not merely that He is good unto the ungrateful and the evil. But even as man must not look for recompense from man, so on earth, at any rate, must he not look for recompense from God. After they have done all that God has commanded them, men must say, "We are servants: we have merely done that which it was our duty to do." The bargaining spirit, which reckons "so much virtue, so much reward," must give place to the higher spirit which perceives that God, for His own good ends, may have to reward the late comer and the repentant sinner at the same rate as, or in a higher degree than, He will reward those who have toiled faithfully the whole livelong day. Virtue must be its own reward: "son, thou art always with me"; that is enough. God may like "to give unto this last, even as unto thee." That is the higher and diviner righteousness, which may supersede the lower righteousness of proportionate requital, or tit for tat. And indeed, so far as earth is concerned, the reward of the righteous may be but sorrow and pain.

It is, perhaps, a more delicate question whether anything may be learnt from the kinds of character towards which Jesus was apparently more drawn and from which he was more repelled. We shall all, at any rate, approve the stress which he laid upon simplicity and singleness of purpose. The new touch

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in morality that in order to enter the Kingdom of God, or, as we might say, in order to be in a right relation to God, we must become as little children, will also appeal to us. For we also not uncommonly say of some of earth's best or even greatest, "He possessed to the end the heart of the child, humble, simple, uncorrupted, pure." Something of this kind was in the mind of Jesus.

Next we may observe that Jesus shows a peculiar tenderness for the down-trodden, the despised, the neglected, the outcast. Even if they are sinners, their sins are at least as much the fault of others' neglect and cruelty as their own. Here, too, he will win our sympathy and our approval. Here, too, our modern democratic feelings are in tune with him. Still more heartily shall we be with him in his evident feeling (though only incidentally evidenced) for the inadequate status of womanhood in an oriental society. We cannot approve his unqualified condemnation of divorce, if indeed he *did* so utterly condemn it. But we shall surely approve of his condemnation of the system whereby the man has the power to divorce, while the woman has not. We shall approve of a limitation of divorce to infidelity, and to certain other grave reasons which could not be within the purview of Jesus, and we shall desire that these reasons should apply with absolute equality to man and to woman.

We note next a certain gentleness in Jesus towards some "fallen" women and even towards an adulteress. Not the sternest and narrowest critic of his teaching would suggest that Jesus was indifferent as regards sexual purity. But we may gather that he perceived that the cause of woman's fall is too often the vileness and cruelty of man. Here, too, he is in line

with modern sentiment, which, to some extent, at any rate, derives directly from him.

The sins which Jesus apparently cannot bear with at all are selfishness, pride, cruelty and self-righteousness. Realising the distance which separates the best of us from the ideal, or from the perfect service of God, he saw no hope of progress in the man who thought that he had already achieved the ideal, and that he served God with perfect propriety and exactitude. The sinner who realised his sinfulness, who still kept a humble heart, might be won to abandon his sin and to enter upon the keen unmeasured service of righteousness and of God. For the self-satisfied proud formalist and precisian, who boasted to himself, to others and to God of his own virtue and of his difference from others, there was no chance of spiritual redemption. It is quite possible that Jesus is something less than just, and something too pessimistically inclined, towards the formalist and the precisian, towards contented respectability, and conventional, average, pedestrian virtue. Nevertheless, there is surely *some* truth in his preferences and his teaching: the parable of the Pharisee and the Tax-Collector enshrines a moral for all time.

If the teaching of Jesus is prophetic in its passion, it is prophetic too in that unqualified and limitless trust or faith in God, by which English words we seek to translate the Greek word "*Pistis*." That faith, as Jesus used the term, was not faith in himself, or belief in any theological propositions as to his nature or his office, but it was primarily faith in *God*, and only secondarily faith in God's messenger and servant which Jesus conceived himself to be. It is the same spiritual quality which is extolled and enjoined by the Psalmists: confidence in God, in His

rule, His righteousness, His wisdom. But the quality, the virtue, is deepened, as Jesus uses the term. By faith he seems to mean a spiritual power, a confidence which enables men to *do* things that otherwise they could not do, that lifts them, as we say, above themselves. But it is also a confidence that God will help them to do things, that He will give them strength to do things, and therefore that they will be enabled to do them. And, lastly, this confidence or trust, when it is evoked, appears to be regenerative ; it can be the basis and beginning of a new moral life : it turns the heart towards goodness : it gives the power to the will to quit the life of sin and to begin the life of virtue. Justly may the past sins of a man, who has begun to have faith, be forgiven, because by the strength of that faith he will be enabled to overcome his sinful tendency and to free himself from its bondage. Is not this doctrine psychologically true ? If a man has any right and ardent conviction about God, either, for instance, that God will surely help him, or that God greatly desires his repentance, this conviction can become a power unto him, enabling him, on the one hand, to conquer his sin and, on the other hand, to fulfil the commands of God. Faith causes works and precedes them. It can be a saving faith, leading both to noble action and to happy peace. This seems the doctrine not so much taught as *implied* in that frequent laudation of "faith" which we meet with in the sayings of Jesus. And this doctrine seems good and true, and only an extension and a deepening of doctrine which is already taught within the pages of the Hebrew Scriptures.

In briefest outline and very unsystematically I have now pointed out the chief elements of value in the teaching of Jesus as recorded in the Synoptic

Gospels. We need, as it seems to me, have the less hesitation in accepting them, and in admitting their source, because we occupy towards the teaching as a whole the vantage-ground of freedom. We have not got to take it, or to leave it, in the lump. We can accept one bit, and reject another. We can qualify; we can emend. We are not perturbed because Jesus ignored the propriety of resistance to evil, and only emphasised the virtue of attempting to overcome evil with good. We can find a place and an hour for resistance and punishment, for policeman and for soldier, as well as for forgiveness and for concession. We can perceive where to yield to the enemy would be treason to the highest. We can know where to fight is the noblest duty. We can understand that punishment may be the best kindness to the evil doer, and that there are kinds of evil doers who, so far as our earth and our duty are concerned, must even be simply removed, or kept under perpetual lock and key. That the teaching of Jesus is neither perfect nor complete: that it includes views about God and His relations with man, which we must reject and repudiate altogether, need not prevent us from accepting, using, acknowledging and reverencing, those portions of his teaching which *do* appeal to us, and which we can regard as valuable and as true.

As regards the second of the three portions into which we have divided the New Testament, I mean the Fourth Gospel and the Johannine Epistles (the Apocalypse and the Acts, for our present purposes, may be disregarded), a very few words will suffice. For both Gospel and Epistles contain little religious and ethical material which has any value for Jewish, or Liberal Jewish, readers.

The doctrine of God taught by the Fourth Gospel is not ours. It does not develop Jewish doctrine, but contradicts it. According to our view, the Johannine doctrine debases the purity of Jewish monotheism instead of developing it. We can only pick out for appropriation the one famous verse: (iv. 23) "God is a Spirit; and they that worship Him must worship in spirit and truth."

Nor can we accept the doctrine of regeneration or spiritual rebirth (*e.g.* iii. 3, 5). So too with the Johannic mysticism. We can appreciate the beauty of such passages as: "If a man love me, he will keep my word; and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him," or, "Neither for these only do I pray, but for them also that believe on me through their word; that they may all be one; even as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be in us." But we cannot *use* such passages. They belong to another theology, another religion, even to another world of religious thought, than ours. Such truth as may be in them we must obtain from other sources, as from the sayings, "I *dwell* with him that is of a contrite spirit," or, "Take not thy Holy Spirit from me," or from Jewish mystics of a later age.

Ethically, as many of its interpreters have recognised, the Fourth Gospel has astonishingly little to teach. Its painful dualism and its doctrine of predestination forbid repentance or forgiveness finding any salient place in its pages. Nevertheless, within the ranks and limits of the disciples, the brotherhood and the believers, it does teach in a few most noble passages an exalted doctrine of love. And this doctrine we can appropriate and universalise. It is odd that just as commentators have to point out

the limitations of Old Testament "love," so have they to point out the limitations of Johannine "love."[1] To my mind the Johannine limitations are, in one sense, worse. They are less natural, naïve and primitive: they are dogmatic, reflective, artificial. They give an early theoretic basis to the awful practice in Christian history of hating and persecuting the heretic and the unbeliever. If the Old Testament "neighbour" only means fellow-countryman, the limit of love was broken down in the Law itself by the inclusion of the resident alien. And from the resident alien it is easy to advance further. But to break down the barrier which separates the children of light for whom Jesus can pray, and the children of the devil, who are left, with complacency and scorn, to their unfortunate destiny, would mean the destruction of the entire scheme of Johannine theology. Nevertheless, in themselves, and remembering, or in spite of, their limitation, the great passages in Gospel and Epistle about love make noble reading and noble doctrine. We can admire, appropriate and adopt them. What can be finer than this? "This is my commandment that ye love one another, even as I have loved you. Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends." Or these passages from the Epistle? "God is love: and he that abideth in love abideth in God, and God abideth in him." *This* is a mysticism which we can appropriate: the teaching that God is love is in full tune with Old Testament teaching that He is loving. "There is no fear in love: but perfect love casteth out fear." "He that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen cannot love God whom he hath not

[1] The best Christian critics and commentators do so now without hesitation. Cp. Proost. "Deze liefde" (*i.e.* the Johannine love) "geldt slechts den onderlingen kring en is beperkt tot de vrienden." *Theologisch Tigdschrift*, 1917, p. 209.

seen. And this commandment have we from him that he who loveth God love his brother also. For this is the love of God that we keep His commandments: and His commandments are not grievous." Through morality to religion, and back again from religion to morality. True and noble doctrine, and in full accord with the finest Old Testament teaching.

It is impossible within the limits of this essay to discuss the teaching of Paul. I cannot enter upon the question whether there is anything or nothing for Liberal Jews to appropriate in his doctrine of faith and grace, or of mystical union with Christ. Though Paul's antagonism to the Law and his antithesis of Faith and Law are for us obsolete, —we have risen above them—it does not necessarily follow that his conception of Faith or of Grace is in itself of no value to us. For one thing it is almost impossible that any fundamental spiritual conception of a great and original genius like Paul should have no elements of value even for those who are far removed from his age, his conflicts, or his creed. But there I must leave the matter, for to enter upon it at all would mean a lengthy exposition for which there is now no opportunity. Many Jews have, I think, a sort of an idea that Paul's doctrine of faith (which they falsely interpret to mean a mere belief in certain propositions about the death and resurrection of Christ) led him to depreciate and to ignore "morality." Even a casual reading of Paul's writings would show them their error, and over and above the one great Pauline doctrine which we have yet to emphasise, Liberal Jews can find much to admire and to appropriate upon the purely ethical side of the Apostle's teaching. It is only necessary just to allude to the famous

paean on love in the thirteenth chapter of the First Epistle to the Corinthians. To that we may add the sayings, "He that loves his neighbour has fulfilled the Law. Love works no ill to his neighbour: love, therefore, is the fulfilment of the Law. Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good" (Romans xiii. 8, 10, xii. 21). Very noble and important is Paul's teaching, won from his own experience, of constant contentment, constant joy. The contentment which the Apostle means is a sort of satisfied independence of mind, a self-sufficiency in all circumstances and a rising above them. "I know," he says, "how to be abased, and I know also how to abound; in everything and in all things have I learned the secret both to be filled and to be hungry, both to abound and to be in want. I can do all things in Him that strengtheneth me" Philippians iv. 11-13). "Rejoice," he says, "in the Lord always: again I say, Rejoice" (Philippians iv. 4). Jesus, in the Sermon on the Mount, had said, "Happy are ye when men shall reproach you and persecute you. Rejoice and be exceeding glad: for great is your reward in heaven." So Paul said: "Let us rejoice in our tribulations" (Romans v. 3), and he speaks of himself "as sorrowful, yet always rejoicing, as having nothing, yet possessing all things" (2 Cor. vi. 10). In all his affliction he "overflows with joy" (2 Cor. vii. 4). The doctrine of joy in suffering may be misapplied, but it contains a glorious truth; it is a fine achievement of human nature. Very striking are the little compendia of ethics which Paul sometimes gives at the close of his letters, as, for instance: "Admonish the disorderly, encourage the faint-hearted, support the weak, be long-suffering toward all. See that none render unto

any one evil for evil: but always follow after that which is good, one toward another, and toward all. Rejoice always: pray without ceasing; in everything give thanks. . . . Prove all things; hold fast that which is good; abstain from every form of evil" (1 Thess. v. 14-18, 21, 22). We may also profit by Paul's counsels of charity and forbearance in matters of external observance. "If because of meat thy brother is grieved, thou walkest no longer in love. If meat makes my brother to stumble, I will eat no flesh for evermore, that I make not my brother to stumble" (Romans xiv. 15; 1 Cor. viii. 13). The relations between Liberal and Orthodox Jew may sometimes be smoothed by calling these and similar fine passages to mind. Paul was well seized with the prophetic doctrine of values. "Nothing is unclean of itself: save that to him who accounts anything to be unclean, to him it is unclean. The Kingdom of God is not eating and drinking, but righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit. Whether therefore ye eat and drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God" (Romans xiv. 14, 17; 1 Cor. x. 31). How noble are those truly Prophetic, partly, too, we may say, those Deuteronomic, words, "He is not a Jew who is one outwardly; neither is that (true) circumcision which is outward in the flesh: but he is a Jew who is one inwardly; and (true) circumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit, not in the letter; whose praise is not of men, but of God" (Romans ii. 28, 29).

But, for our present purposes, the great and momentous contribution of Paul to religious development was his pronounced and emphatic universalism. He broke down the barrier (it is true by erecting

another) between Jew and Gentile: he put all believers in Christ upon an equality, whether they were Gentiles or whether they were Jews. That in *his* sense we do not believe in Christ, that to us *all* men are alike God's children, whatever their creed, must not blind us to the greatness of his achievement. We must not be captious or hesitating in acknowledgment and praise. "Is God the God of Jews only? Is He not the God of Gentiles also?" "For there is no distinction between Jew and Greek: for the same Lord is Lord of all and is rich unto all that call upon Him" (Romans iii. 29, x. 12). Before and "in" Christ, or, as we should say, before and with God, there cannot be, and there is not, "Greek and Jew, circumcision and uncircumcision, barbarian, Scythian, bondman, freeman, male and female" (Col. iii. 11; Gal. iii. 28).

To this universalism, in spite of its partial limitation to those who believe in the Messiahship of Jesus, the Liberal Jew cannot refuse to render his homage. He will not refuse to recognise its enormous significance, or to realise that, whether we like the fact or no, it established a world religion. Judaism had, so far, not been able to solve the puzzle of the universal God and the national cult. Paul cut the knot. He cut it, it is true, by setting up dogmas which darkened the purity of monotheism, and opened the door for many subsequent evils both in religion and morality; but yet he cut it. We will not deny to him his meed of glory.

Yet it is only fair to point out that neither Rabbinic particularism nor Pauline universalism was complete. In Rabbinism there are universalist elements of great moment and significance; in Paulinism, of no less moment and significance, there

are elements of particularism. Liberal Judaism has combined the good elements, and has rejected the evil elements, of both Rabbinism and Paulinism.

Paul doubtless declared that in the Messiah Jesus there is neither Jew nor Greek: he made the new religion independent of race. He broke down the shackles which had so greatly hindered the diffusion of Judaism beyond the limits of a single nation. He showed that religion was something gloriously wider than any single people. But, in destroying one kind of shackles, he created another. In shattering old fetters, he forged new ones. And these new fetters, though related to morality, were yet distinct from it. All who believe in the Messiah Jesus are on an equality, be their race, their social position, or their sex, what it may. But what of those who do *not* believe in him? These are left in, or relegated to, the outer darkness. And just as the Jews were tempted to declare (in order to save the moral situation) that every heathen was of necessity a sinner, so were Christians soon tempted to describe those who rejected — and even those who were ignorant of—Christ. The unbeliever, not because he is of a particular race, but in virtue of his unbelief, is a child of perdition and of sin. And, in some ways, this particularism, when "faith" is partly degraded to an intellectual assent to certain theological dogmas and subtleties, is more shocking, more calumniating to the goodness of God, than the particularism of the Rabbis.

Moreover, the fetters of this Pauline Christian particularism proved more heavy and more powerful than the fetters of race. The Gospel became more pitiless than the Law. And the Christian fetters lasted, with small breaks and loosenings, till modern times.

Some dubious exceptions were made for Socrates and Plato, and a few others of the heroes of Greece and of Rome, but neither the ancient nor the mediaeval Church ever enunciated the doctrine: "the righteous, be their religious beliefs what they may, shall have a share in the blessedness of the world to come."

The Rabbis, however, to their great credit and glory, broke down their *nationalistic* particularism, even while the *credal* particularism of the Church was hardly penetrated by any serious breach. In an early Rabbinic treatise we find the immortal saying: "The righteous of all nations shall have a share in the world to come." In other words: not genealogy, but conduct, is the passport to heaven. It is true that a Rabbi could hardly have conceived a man as righteous who did not believe in One God. But, nevertheless, not religious belief, but conduct, is made the condition. The righteous: *he* it is who is "saved." Righteousness—not race, not belief—*that* is what God cares for, looks to and demands.

And this saying, so great and august in its simplicity, won its way gradually more and more, and became the official doctrine of the Synagogue from comparatively early times. Long before any Church said: "It matters not what a man believes: God looks to his deeds," Judaism, without making the antithesis in so many words, had asserted the doctrine which it implies. Rightly may Rabbinic apologists quote over and over again this single illuminating sentence. It did not at first mean all that they make it mean: to attempt to find modern toleration in the Talmud is absurd and unhistoric, but nevertheless this single sentence meant a noble

meaning even to its first author, and it gradually grew to mean more and more.

The universalism of Liberal Judaism derives, therefore, both from Paul and from the Rabbis, though it has moved far beyond both. For to us universalism does not stop short before the redemption of every human soul : and if we clothe our faith in sensuous terms, we should say, " The sinners of every faith and nation shall have a share in the world to come."

I have called this chapter, " Liberal Judaism and the New Testament," and the words were intended to imply that I could not enter into any detailed consideration of the life or the character of Jesus. I have only spoken—briefly and scrappily—of his teaching : the character and personality behind the teaching have not been alluded to at all. Nevertheless, it would be undesirable that this most important question should be *wholly* passed by or slurred over.

To the Christian, Jesus is much more than a wise and noble teacher. He is considered to be the exemplar of absolute goodness, the exhibition of the divine. Even to those to whom he is God, he is also " very man," and they regard his earthly life as the manifestation of divine perfection. And even the Unitarians hold that never was any man so good and noble as this man ; that in him we see the ideal manhood realised at once and for ever. Not only that no man ever spake as he spoke, but no man ever lived and died as he did. He was more than inspired, because in his flawless and sinless perfection, the divine and the human permanently coalesced and were as one. Even Unitarians would, I believe, go as far as this. Jesus is the Master, not only because his doctrine is a new departure, fulfilling and

improving all that was good in the old teaching, not only because he laid down, with conscious and deliberate authority, a supreme and perfect scheme of religion and morality, but because he actually lived the ideal life, so that "the imitation of Christ" is for all times the ideal towards which his followers and all men must strive. Than his life there can be nothing higher, greater, nobler or more beautiful.

A new charity, a new delicacy, have arisen in these latter years—the delicacy which scruples to enter into the sanctuary of another, and to expose it to the strong light of criticism and of reason. If Christian scholars have, so far, shown little scruple of this kind towards the sanctuary of the Orthodox Jew, the Liberal Jew may nevertheless feel this scruple very keenly about the sanctuary of the Christian. For he has drawn nutriment — even moral and religious nutriment—from a civilisation which the Christian ideal has helped to generate, and he has also drawn nutriment from the venerable documents in which the life and death of Jesus are portrayed. Nevertheless his highest master is the truth (as he sees it), and to truth, which is God, his ultimate allegiance must be paid.

Professor Jowett once wrote: "There is an ideal which we have to place before us intimately connected with practical life—nothing, if not a life—which may be conveniently spoken of as the life of Christ." This ideal the life of Christ expresses to every Christian. He reads into it, and draws out of it, the full content of his ideal. And sometimes those who are unorthodox as regards the miracles seem, as it were, to recoup themselves by an almost excessive exaltation of the character and the teaching. Just because the virgin birth and the bodily

resurrection and all the other miracles have vanished, the uniqueness, novelty and utter originality of the character, the teaching and the life, must be emphasised by them all the more. For in what else can their Christianity consist? More especially in the Liberal Protestant theologians of Germany, with their habitual anti-Semitic tinge, have we observed this tendency, to deepen the surrounding darkness, and to magnify the brilliant light, in the most marked and intensified degree.

But what does the outsider see? What does the man see, who tries with all his strength to be impartial, and who has, at all events, this one great satisfaction, that he has been criticised by the Jews for praising too much and by the Christians for praising too little?

First of all, this outsider has to say that, in his opinion, there is a paucity of material, and, secondly, that some of the material is uncertain. Important critics have said in substance that Jesus was so infinitely greater than his reporters, who misunderstood him so often, that we may safely ascribe to him all the purest and best and noblest things in the Synoptic Gospels, and reject anything which is merely "Judaic," "contemporary," and inconsistent. But this is a very dangerous canon of criticism. Some of the best things may even belong to the reporter and not to the hero. We cannot make our modern preferences the test for authenticity. Nor can we say of any man that he never was inconsistent with himself.

What do we really know of the life of the man who is said to have lived the most perfect and adorable life that ever was lived? Nothing more, practically, than what we are told in the Gospel of Mark. And how fragmentary, how small this is. In all probability all that we are told about him relates to one

single year of his life—the last. And of this one year, how much do we really know? How many incidents are related of it? How many of these incidents are above suspicion, and how many of them are of a kind in which high nobility of character is revealed? Very few.

In all probability the life of a peripatetic Jewish teacher of the first century was not one of peculiar hardship. In spite of a certain famous verse in Matthew, there is no good evidence that, for the greater part of his teaching career, Jesus had any gigantic troubles and difficulties to encounter or grave sacrifices to make. Then we come to the journey to Jerusalem, the last days and the death. And here, too, uncertainty dogs us still. We cannot tell for sure whether Jesus went to Jerusalem with the expectation of life and revealed Messiahship or with the expectation of death. But, in spite of the famous cry upon the cross, which can either be explained away or regarded as unauthentic, let us suppose that he went prepared for death. It is quite as probable as, if not more probable than, the contrary hypothesis. Who shall then deny the nobility of his action, the beauty and the greatness of his sacrifice?

But the outsider is compelled to declare that, even so, we do not know enough of Jesus—the records are too small and too uncertain—for us to assert categorically that this man's life was unique, perfect and unapproachable. The material shrinks together.

We may, if we please, call the ideal life—and each of us will make up his own ideal—the life of Christ. But to call the life of the historic Jesus the flawless exemplar, the essence, the completion, the fulness, of the absolutely perfect life, seems to me exaggerated and impossible. It is not so much that there are

one or two holes to pick in what we know. It is not that there are a few easy (Christians would say shallow) criticisms to make in this action of his or in that. It is that what we do know (if "know" be indeed the word) is so extremely small. An heroic death, upon the one interpretation, is undoubted. But can we speak of an heroic life? Where are the noble deeds? We cannot make a list of them, for they simply do not exist.

Nevertheless, through the mist and the uncertainty and the paucity of the evidence, we seem to see the lineaments of a striking character. We seem to see a man aflame with love of God and love of man, who passed his short life, and encountered his awful death, in their true and unflagging service. We seem to see a man of singular purity of soul, and of absolute sincerity of purpose. A large-hearted man, who gazed into the deepest nature of righteousness, and realised the very essence of true religion. A man who loved and was beloved, who looked below the surface, and could recognise the germs of goodness beneath neglect and ignorance and sin. A hater of shams and hypocrisy and formalism and conceit, yet, withal, a man conscious of his own power, his own inspiration, his own message and mission from God. A man of great tenderness, of deep compassion, he cared deeply for the waifs and strays, the flotsam and jetsam, of humanity, who were often more sinned against than sinning. Yet a strong man too, and a fearless, who could denounce those from whom he differed, those who opposed his teaching, and those in whom he saw, or thought he saw, the sins he specially hated—self-righteousness, hypocrisy, formalism—with the utmost force, and with, perhaps, exaggerated violence. A lover of children, and a lover of nature, simple,

serene and single-eyed ; no ascetic, no solitary, but independent of material needs, detached, because his higher duty, as he believed, demanded it, from all human ties of family or state. He lived for his fellow-Jews and died for them : he lived in obedience to his mission, and in intimate communion with God. A holy man, undoubtedly ; one who realised the Fatherhood of God with vivid intensity, and lived habitually as in His presence.

Such, apparently, was Jesus. Not perfect, not sinless, but a striking personality, who left the deepest impression upon his followers. Not for the adherents of Liberal Judaism the one and only Master, not the adored exemplar of all perfection, not the One Consummate Teacher, whose words must not be criticised, subtracted from, or added to, but yet for all time, and without question, a noble and illustrious Jew.

And now, returning to the book, of which Jesus is the Hero and the Centre, let me say this one more word. To develop seems easier than to lay the broad foundations. We will not minimise the greatness of the New Testament, or cheapen the originality whether of Jesus or of Paul. But when we compare the achievement of the Old Testament with that of the New, we realise how much greater is our obligation to the Old. When you have won through to your monotheism, and to the doctrine of the One Good God, when you have got your Prophets with their weaving together of religion and morality, when you have got your commands and ideals to love God with all your heart, and the neighbour and the resident alien as yourself, when you have reached the ideals of justice and compassion, of the clean hands and the pure heart,—why, then, it was, in a sense, *comparatively* easy to

supplement, to bring together, to purify, to universalise. Only comparatively easy, of course! The achievements of Jesus and Paul (in spite of some sad retrogressions) are great achievements. But what we owe to them seems but little in comparison with what we owe to their Old Testament predecessors. The bulk of our religion and the bulk of our morality seem due neither to Jesus nor to Paul, neither to Plato nor to Epictetus, but to the sacred Scripture of the Jews. For Liberal Jews and for Liberal Judaism, the Old Testament remains primary and fundamental, the New Testament secondary and supplemental. For the Old Testament contains the conceptions of the One God, righteous and loving, of the service of God as realised in the service of man, of justice and compassion and peace forming the content of social righteousness, of the love of God and of our neighbour and of the foreign settler within our gates, of the sanctification of life through religion and law and duty, of the divine forgiveness and of human repentance, of the free access of mankind to God without go-between or mediator, of communion with God, and of spiritual joy. These doctrines, here enumerated, in no systematic order, constitute the substance of Judaism and of Liberal Judaism both to-day and to-morrow. These we find in the old Hebrew Bible, which remains *our* Bible still. The supplementary and complementary teachings in the New Testament we will also make use of and frankly admire, but the Old Testament, both in regard to what it says and to what it does not say, to what it contains and to what it omits, abides as the basis of our faith, as our stronghold and our charter.

APPENDIX

I HAVE said, in Chapter II., p. 108, that the love and pity of Jesus stop short of his own critics and antagonists. In my little book on the *Religious Teaching of Jesus* (1910) I had taken the same line. I pointed out that the "*outcast*" was a "little one" whom God sought to save: the *opponent* was an offspring of vipers and a child of perdition. I urged that, except "in the way of sheer abuse and bitter vituperation, Jesus did nothing to win over to his own conception of religion the Pharisees and Rabbis who ventured to criticise and dislike him." I regarded this "abuse and vituperation" as a mark of human weakness and human inconsistency. I had said much the same in my *Synoptic Gospels* (1909). And even to-day, after nine years of further reflection, I see no reason to change anything that I then wrote. But partly in order to show that no Christian can agree with me, I added this note: "In a friendly review of my *Synoptic Gospels* in the *Nation* the writer says: 'When he blames Jesus for breaking the law of love by vehemently denouncing the Pharisees, the censure fails in psychological acuteness. One had imagined that Martineau had given the death-blow to this sort of criticism.' And a friend wrote to me: 'I do not feel quite as you do about the "Woes" upon the Pharisees. These woes, it seems to me, were pronounced on the class, so far as they possess the faults referred to in the context, just as Jesus says elsewhere, "Woe unto you when all men speak well of you." In neither case need Jesus, it seems to me, be supposed to feel hatred of the persons addressed, but only hatred of an attitude of mind'" (*Religious Teaching of Jesus*, pp. 53, 54, 168).

I asked Dr. Carpenter, the biographer, pupil, friend and

successor of Dr. Martineau, what the reference was to which the reviewer in the *Nation* alluded. Dr. Carpenter told me that the reference must be to Book ii. chapters i. and ii. of the *Seat of Authority in Religion*. Let us, therefore, see what Dr. Martineau there argues that would invalidate my remarks.

To begin with, Dr. Martineau seems to take the line that the teaching of Jesus is necessarily perfect. Clearly, if you assume *a priori* that a given character in history, and the words which he spoke, are flawless and perfect, there is nothing more to be said. Between such a person and one who asserts the right to judge all men and all men's words, and to judge them by ordinary canons of reason and common sense, there is a great gulf fixed. There is no common ground for debate and discussion. And the whole tone of Dr. Martineau's pleading seems to show that this was his belief: the teaching of Jesus was immaculate and perfect. His reverence for the Master is beautiful; but is it scientific? Nevertheless, Dr. Martineau cannot help being aware that not all the words ascribed to Jesus in the Synoptic Gospels are entirely consistent with each other. But if the teaching is flawless, it must be consistent, and if it is flawless, it must be flawless according to Dr. Martineau's ideals of what flawlessness consists in. These ideals I might incidentally mention are by no means the same as many another commentator or theologian would hold. For instance, Matthew xi. 28-30, which so many Christians regard as not only compatible with flawlessness, but illustrative of it, are regarded by Dr. Martineau as only gracious and true if they were *not* spoken by Jesus. *Therefore* the deduction is at once drawn: "Plainly we have here the reflective experience of grateful disciples." The dangerous subjectivity of this method of deciding authenticity is surely obvious. But Dr. Martineau raises it into a regular canon of criticism. It is, indeed, no new canon, and had already been employed by others, themselves, like Dr. Martineau, anxious to maintain the flawlessness of the Master's teaching and character, according to their own particular (and highly modern) conceptions of flawlessness. By Dr. Martineau the canon is expressed thus: "Acts and words ascribed to

Jesus which plainly transcend the moral level of the narrators authenticate themselves as his: while such as are out of character with his spirit, but congruous with theirs, must be referred to inaccurate tradition." Against this canon of special pleading, which refuses to allow any inconsistency in the teaching of the Master, which judges his ideals on the most modern lines, which rejects the possibility that an editor or compiler might have a momentary impulse of high inspiration, how far more sober, more critical and more valuable is the famous and pregnant canon of Wellhausen: "Die Wahrheit bezeugt nur sich selber und nicht ihren Autor."

But now, returning to the particular passages in the Gospels my criticism of which has been challenged, let us see how Dr. Martineau deals with them. He does not by any means (as one would suppose from the review in the *Nation*) accept and defend them in their entirety. He does his best, but they make even him a little uncomfortable. So he has to use his canon about them, in order to water them down to that particular degree of fierceness which he regards as compatible with flawlessness and perfection. Thus while the anti-Pharisaic discourses *do* "represent the real attitude of Jesus towards the ecclesiastical teaching of his time," yet they show "traces of later conformation" (p. 671, *n.* 1, ed. 5). More definite still are the statements upon an earlier page: "These antipharisaic discourses are throughout tinctured with the feeling of the post-apostolic time." And even more trenchant is the following: "Embedded in these discourses there may be" (note "may be") "many a pithy saying, and many a piercing rebuke, that really came from the lips of Jesus; but the tone of intense passion pervading them, with total disregard of all times and seasons, *is utterly at variance with the ruling affections and inward repose of his spirit*" (italics mine). The "moral enthusiasm" of Jesus "peals forth in the august tones of wounded justice, *not in the shrill rage of mere vituperation*" (italics mine: p. 661).

So far as Dr. Martineau is concerned, I might leave the matter here. The reviewer has appealed to Dr. Martineau: he is answered out of Dr. Martineau's own mouth. I do

not think that I had used any worse or more condemnatory expression than "*the shrill rage of mere vituperation*"!

Let us, however, note how Dr. Martineau defends such parts of the "antipharisaic discourses" as he would allow to be authentic. The trouble is that he never tells us definitely which those parts are, or whether what he means is that we may assume that Jesus did severely condemn the Pharisees, but that there has been a sort of general sharpening up of his phrases, so that we cannot be sure of any particular sentence, whether it has reached us in the form in which Jesus spoke it. If *that* were the case, I could have nothing further to say. The vipers and the children of hell and other phrases of this kind would, I suppose, all belong to the extra sharpening up. What, however, is left when the sharpening up is removed? And how does Dr. Martineau deal with the indefinite remainder? To begin with, he assumes, and even magnifies, the moral obliquity of the men whom Jesus attacks. If any one else were involved, a critic such as Dr. Martineau would surely consider whether it would not be natural and human for an enthusiastic innovator to exaggerate the faults in the characters of his conservative opponents. He would ask whether the opponent is ever really so black as he is painted by the passionate reformer. He would discuss whether what may have been wholly true of one or two, or partially true of three or four, has not been unjustifiably extended to cover a whole class, a whole section. But as the reformer is Jesus, Dr. Martineau does none of these obvious and usual things. Whatever *Jesus* said we must *assume* to have been perfectly just! Hence we are told of "sanctimonious impostors," "Pharisaic hypocrisy and ambition," "blind guides that at once burdened and misled the people," "sacerdotal dignitaries with their flaunting texts and empty pretences to superior sanctity," "formal rigour and hollow semblance," and so on. No attempt is made to ask whether all these ethical horrors really apply to the large percentage of those who *opposed* Jesus' methods and pretensions, and *received* his condemnation and abuse.

Let us assume, however, that an enormous percentage of Scribes, Pharisees and Priests were the sanctimonious im-

postors and wicked hypocrites which Dr. Martineau believes them to have been, and the question still presents itself: was the language which Jesus used towards them the sort of language best calculated

(*a*) to cure them, or

(*b*) to stiffen them in their "iniquity"?

Jesus undoubtedly hated the sin of unchastity. He hated "the attitude of mind" of those who committed such sins. It is clear, however, that he did not hate the persons who had committed them. He denounced them with no "woes" and no "vipers," such as the "woes" and the "vipers" with which he denounced the Scribes and the Pharisees, not even so far as "they possessed the faults" to which he raised objection.

It may be said (1) that Jesus disliked the sins of hypocrisy and sanctimoniousness and self-righteousness and formalism more than he disliked the sins of passion; (2) that these sins *are* morally much worse than the sins of passion; (3) that the sinners of these sins are much less curable and redeemable than the sinners of the sins of passion. All this may be perfectly true, but it is also true—is it not?—that these worse sinners were human beings with souls worth saving. The harder the nut, the more interesting the problem of cracking it. Did Jesus go the right way about it? At all events, he went a very different way from the way in which he sought to tackle the outcasts and the sinners of passion. Why was abuse likely to cure the hypocrites? Why was the method of love out of the question with *them*? Is it not obvious to any unprejudiced person that Jesus *wanted* to cure the outcasts, and that he *loved* them in spite of their sins, but that he did *not* love the "hypocrites," and that he did *not* love them in spite of their sins? And is not the reason obvious? The outcasts did *not* oppose him: the "hypocrites" *did*. A most human reason, a most natural reason; a reason which has affected every reformer; but yet a reason of human weakness—forgivable human weakness—but not a reason of flawlessness and perfection.

Nor when we turn to Dr. Martineau can we discover any real justification for the "vipers" and the "children of hell." He says, for instance: "Whoever lives, like Jesus,

straight out of a spring of affection which needs no rules while it is aflow, and cannot use them when it is dry, is necessarily impatient of the moral mimicry that puts on the grimaces and does the postures of goodness without the essence behind" (p. 680). No doubt. Such a one is "necessarily impatient." And perhaps all the more impatient if these Bad People are his critics and antagonists! But it does not follow that "necessary impatience" is the highest moral attitude, or the most efficacious to produce redemption. It may be quite true that he "indignantly exposed" the sins of these Bad Sinners; it may be quite true that it was "impossible" that his "antipathy" to "formal rigour and hollow semblance" should be "anything less than intense." But it does not follow that the antipathy which, in the case of these particular people, did *not* distinguish between the Sin and the Sinner, was not only "intense," but wise, and flawless, and efficacious for redemption. On another page Dr. Martineau most rightly distinguishes between the supposed "leniency" which Jesus showed "exclusively towards *outcast sin*" and his very different attitude towards "sin in its court dress," etc. etc. etc. (there follow a magnificent paraphrase and exposition of such sin). "Did he address himself," asks Dr. Martineau, to *this* sin "as the physician to heal it or as the judge to condemn it?" To this question my reply is that he addressed himself to it solely as the judge, and not only to "it," the sin, but also to the sinner. The one sort of sinner he tried to heal, the other sort he only condemned and abused. Dr. Martineau himself seems to feel that all is not quite settled and satisfactory by his first question, so he follows it up with a second. "Or rather did he not, by the sharpness of his condemnation, identify himself with the voice itself of conscience and of God, and so bring into play the only living power in which healing could be found?" This sentence apparently means that the condemnation which Jesus employed was, nevertheless, in these cases, the best method to bring about healing. From which opinion I can only, with all respect, venture to differ. I believe that the condemnation was neither calculated nor intended to work redemption. Of course, if, with Dr. Martineau, you first edit the condem-

nation, and remove "the shrill rage of mere vituperation" (including, I suppose, the "vipers" and the "children of hell"), you can do what you please with the remainder. But is this a critical method of procedure? Is it permissible? Is it not better with Oskar Holtzmann frankly to grasp the bull by the horns, and, *e.g.* as regards many of the phrases used, or alleged to have been used, by Jesus in Matt. xxiii., to say: "Das sind Kampfreden, die ebenso hyperbolisch sind, wie wenn Jesus sagt, dass die Pharisäer Mücken seihen und Kameele verschlucken . . . Wenn die Führer der Pharisäer wirklich mit keinem Finger an die Lasten gerührt hätten, die sie andern auflegen wollten, so hätten sie schwerlich die Ehre und den Einfluss gewonnen, die sie tatsächlich gehabt haben."

For these reasons I am unable to see that my strictures upon the language of Jesus fail in psychological acuteness, or that Dr. Martineau has in any way succeeded in "giving the death-blow to this sort of criticism."

Finally, I must still venture to hold that, as regards "loving your enemies," Jesus—and does not this prove his humanity?—found it far easier to preach than to practise. I am no less grateful for, and no less an admirer of the preaching, though I might have been still more grateful for, and a still keener admirer of, the practice. We have no recorded instance of Jesus praying for his enemies, his real, actual enemies, the Scribes and Rabbis and Pharisees. He was humanly inconsistent, as no end of great teachers and reformers both before him and after him. Shall I be answered by the noble "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do"? But is the authenticity of that verse above much suspicion? And are we sure who the objects of forgiveness were? Was it the Roman soldiers? Or was it the Jewish populace? Even if the second supposition be true, there is no conscious inclusion of their religious leaders, the Scribes, the Rabbis, the Priests, the Pharisees. Turn the matter as you will, and try your hardest; you cannot show that Jesus loved, and sought to heal, and freely forgave, and prayed for, those who opposed his teaching and denied his claims.

III

LIBERAL JUDAISM AND RABBINICAL LITERATURE

Liberal Judaism, as we have already seen, does not desire to cut off its connections with the past. Like all historic religions, it draws some of its strength, and much of its inspiration, from the days of long ago. If some of its difficulties arise from its keeping in touch with former generations, this keeping in touch gives it colour and distinctiveness and power. It is not the creation of to-day or of yesterday : it is a development ; it has a long history at its back. Its outward expression, its forms and institutions, are the outcome of growth and of gradual change. Its doctrines, too, are still mainly the old doctrines, deepened, enlarged and purified, but yet fundamentally the same.

I have discussed the relations of Liberal Judaism to the Hebrew Bible. I have also, in shortest and roughest outline, considered its relations to the New Testament, to that collection of Greek documents which forms the second portion of their Bible to the great majority of our fellow-citizens in Europe and America.

I desire now to speak of the relation of Liberal Judaism to that huge collection of writings which

can be conveniently lumped together under the generic denomination of Rabbinical Literature. Beginning roughly with the opening of the common era, and extending to the seventh or eighth century after Christ, this literature has a place of great importance in the religion of Orthodox Judaism. For in it is comprised and included that Oral Law, which, according to the official dogma of orthodoxy, was as much divinely revealed to Moses, and therefore as ancient and as authoritative, as the Pentateuch itself. Orthodox Judaism to-day seldom alludes to this strange and erroneous doctrine: the Oral Law, *as a body of enactments divinely revealed to Moses*, and handed down from *him*, unwritten but unforgotten, has been suffered to drop away into the limbo of obsolete dogmas. It has not been given an official burial, but has been allowed to wilt and fade in the fresh air of knowledge and enlightenment. Nevertheless, the laws and enactments embodied in the Rabbinical literature, at a later age codified and systematised, are still recognised by the orthodox synagogue as binding upon its adherents—such of them, at any rate, as are applicable to conditions of exile. They are still regarded as more or less divine, and unsusceptible of modification or abolition. Indeed, the laws are more sacred and more divine than the ideas and conceptions upon which they rest. It is much less necessary to believe exactly as our Rabbinic forefathers believed than it is to follow their religious customs and practices. Yet the ideas and conceptions, although placed on a distinctly lower level of importance and authority, are yet regarded with considerable respect and admiration. More especially is frequent effort made to establish their superiority, and if possible their priority, to the ideas

and conceptions of the New Testament. And at the same time, and with some gentle and forgivable inconsistency, it is sought to show that they are very modern and up-to-date ideas, singularly free from the supposed limitations and errors of nationalistic prejudices, or of the prepossessions and peculiarities of antiquity. The Rabbinical literature is darkly alluded to as a mass of beauties, nobilities and truths, to which its few chosen students rightly devote their lives.

How, then, does Liberal Judaism regard this literature? What is our attitude towards it? There is a peculiar initial trouble about it to which it is as well to call attention at the start.

An ordinary person can read the Old Testament and the New. Any educated person, whether Jew or Christian, may be expected to have read, though not to have studied, these books. They are translated into every language, and they are not so very long. When, then, the student or the scholar proceeds to talk to the ordinary person, or to the ordinary educated person, about these books, he may assume a general acquaintance with them, perhaps even some familiarity with certain parts of them. But the case is very different when we turn to the Rabbinical literature. It is of vast size: only a few scholars have read it, or are familiar with it, all. Only portions of it have been translated, and many of these portions only into one particular language. For various reasons—some of which will be presently noted—even these translated portions are familiar, and are likely to be familiar, to comparatively few Jews, even of those who know the languages into which these portions have been translated. Only one small book, as a whole, is familiar to many persons,

and I fear that that one small book—the Pirke Aboth, or Sayings of the Fathers—is not familiar to the mass of Liberal Jews, because, while it is included, as a whole, in the Orthodox Prayer Book, it is not, I think, included in any Liberal Prayer Book. This omission is, in some respects, a pity.

It is desirable briefly to consider the reasons for this lack of acquaintanceship. They are many.

The Rabbinical literature is, on the whole, much more remote from us than even the Old Testament or the New. From various causes it does not so readily hook on to, and connect itself with, our Western life and our Western point of view. The Old and the New Testaments have, in a certain sense, become part and parcel of our modern civilisation and thought: we can hardly escape from their influence even if we would. That is not the case with the Rabbinical literature.

Again that literature is not only huge in size, but it is also very formless. It is, as a whole, rambling, discursive, inartistic, amorphous.

Thirdly, while it has many great things in it—great thoughts well and nobly, or at any rate, well and quaintly, said, it is not great as a whole. Nor is any one book in it great, as Isaiah or Aeschylus or the Fourth Gospel is great. But it is only great literature which translates well.

Lastly, while it embodies many great and fine ideas, it also contains a very great deal which is to us tiresome, unsympathetic, ugly and obsolete, which we do not believe in, which we have got beyond or superseded, which does not concern us, which is out of relation to our lives.

To the Liberal Jew, or indeed to any Jew, the sharp contrast between the Old Testament and

the Rabbinical literature is something like the contrast, for the Christian, between the New Testament and the works of the Church Fathers. In some ways the Patristic literature may be a little less remote, because the original language is Greek or Latin, and because its component parts are books with the unity of a single author and a single mind. They are also less formless. Yet even they are only read by a few scholars. Except, perhaps, the Confessions of St. Augustine, hardly one is familiar to the ordinary educated person. Nevertheless, I for one, Liberal Jew as I am,—or, shall I say, just because I am a Liberal Jew ?—am not satisfied with the existing condition of affairs. Still less should I be satisfied to see the Rabbinical literature more and more neglected, progressively and increasingly unfamiliar, and sinking gradually into a complete desuetude and oblivion. A few scholars, even a few Liberal Jewish scholars, should still read that literature and study it. And a somewhat more numerous class, standing between the pure scholar and the ordinary educated man, should also know and read something of that literature ; some of it in the original, a good deal more in translations. This in-between class is dependent upon the pure scholar. And as regards the Rabbinical literature it has to be said that the modern scholar—the modern Jewish scholar—has not done his duty to the world. He has not done all he could do, he has not done that which could, or has to, be done, to make his subject alive and real and valuable—even within the limits of the possible—to the in-between class and, through that class, to ordinary educated men. You cannot make the Rabbinic literature as alive as Amos or as Plato, but you

can make it more alive than to most of us it now is. And to do this is the duty of the scholar. He has to show its connections with other literatures and with modern and Western ideas. He has to point out the parallels and the contrasts, to reveal the new in the old, the ore in the dross, the fine and deep thought in a strange and unfamiliar wrapping. He has to edit Rabbinic books with modern notes, and on the lines of the best and most illuminating editions of the Greek and Latin classics. He has to translate them, and not to regard it as beneath his dignity to translate them, any more than a Jowett and a Jebb thought it beneath their dignity to translate Sophocles or Plato. It is idle to complain of the neglect of Rabbinical literature, if the scholar does not himself do his best to make that neglect unjustifiable. Then the in-between man, when he is given his tools, the good editions and translations, will mediate between the scholar and the ordinary educated person, and he will bring the Rabbinical literature more, and yet nearer, home; he will, so far as he can, diffuse it and make it known. It is not to the credit of the Jews that the most useful, suggestive and wholly modern edition of a Rabbinic treatise, as well as the most available translations of great portions of the Midrash, are from the hands of Christian scholars.

The Rabbinic books, like other books, are the shells and outward coverings of certain ideas, doctrines, aspirations. Indeed, it is these ideas, doctrines, aspirations, which are so especially important in Rabbinic literature, because the form of the literature is so unattractive and so valueless. We can study Sophocles for his form and artistry quite apart from his ideas. No man would study

the Rabbinic literature from that point of view. It has no artistry. And perhaps the very title of this chapter of my book should not be, what is the relation of Liberal Judaism to Rabbinic literature, but what is the relation of Liberal Judaism to the ideas, doctrines and aspirations—the religious ideas, doctrines and aspirations — which are contained in that literature, or which can be educed from it.

As Liberal Jews we ought to be capable of impartiality. We, especially, from our past and our present, should be able to judge Rabbinic literature fairly. "Nothing extenuate, nor set down aught in malice." Its faults we shall see, but we should not exaggerate them. Its virtues should neither be minimised nor magnified. For we are in a position of vantage. And that is why Liberal Jewish scholars of Rabbinic are so necessary and desirable. We are neither too near nor too far. We have no dogmatic, barbed-wire entanglements, whether as adherents or as opponents. We have, or we should have, no prejudices, as thick and thin defenders, upon the one hand, nor again have we, or should we have, prejudices, as out and out antagonists, upon the other. Legalism is not our passion or our banner. But also it is not to us a red rag to a bull, as it is to so many of our Protestant friends. So we should be open-eyed enough to observe clearly and gauge fairly both the merits of Rabbinic literature and its defects, with philosophic calm, historic appreciation and religious sympathy.

Especially, if there is any need or desire to study or determine the relation of Rabbinic literature and of its religious ideas with the religious ideas contained in the New Testament, ought Liberal Jews to be well situated for quiet and comprehensive judgment.

We ought to be freer and more impartial than Orthodox Jews, on the one hand, or than Christians, upon the other. We should be able to keep our eyes open to all that is good and noble and original and true in both literatures. We ought also to be able to guard ourselves against reading a volume into a sentence, against overpressing or ignoring a context, against making a mountain out of a molehill and a molehill out of a mountain. On the whole, Liberal Jewish scholars have not, it must be confessed, proved themselves quite as impartial as might be wished or expected. They have leaned rather heavily to the Jewish side. On the whole, great scholars like Geiger or Kohler have tended to render a fuller justice, and to pay a keener appreciation, to the Rabbis than either to Jesus or to Paul.

At every stage of every religion's development there are rough edges. But those who live at each stage, and are believers, are little conscious of these rough edges. We see the rough edges in the religion of our forefathers, but much less vividly in our own. There were several of these rough edges at the close of the Old Testament, about the middle of the second century before the Christian Era. We might ask how far did the Rabbinic development of Judaism smooth out any of these edges, or again, how far is our Liberal Judaism to-day nearer to the Rabbis than to the Bible?

The Old Testament, a collection of writings, extending over many centuries, ranging, let us say, from 950 to 150 B.C.—a space of time which separates us from Henry the First, King of England—is naturally a mass of inconsistencies and contradictions. And none of these eight hundred years was a period of systematisation in theology. Religion grew and

changed—not always, if generally, for the better: but theories of religion were not put forward. The doctrine of God and of His relation to man and to Israel, the problem of evil, the doctrine of rewards and punishments and the nature of sin, the conception of the Messianic age, of life after death, of the relation of the ritual to the moral, and of the Law and its purpose,—on all these points and on several others the edges were left rough, uncut and jagged. The teaching of Prophet, Lawgiver and Sage had not been forced into any rounded compromise or balanced unity.

Meanwhile, the destruction of temple and state caused a violent break with the past. Something of a new start had to be made, even if the religious leaders of the time were only partly conscious that they were making it. But it is a characteristic of the entire Rabbinic period that the religion was extremely unsystematic and undogmatic. If that is a sign of life, the Rabbinic religion was alive with a vengeance! The edges continue extremely rough: no philosophic attempt is made to smooth them and trim them into regularity. It needed the incoming of Aristotle through the Arabs to produce the theories and systematisations of Maimonides and the other mediaeval Jewish philosophers. Yet in spite of the lack of theory and system, in spite of the many inconsistencies and contradictions, there is more religious unity, more religious agreement, in the Rabbinic literature than in the literature of the Old Testament. If we add 800 years to 150 B.C., and call that the Rabbinic period, it would be easier and more proper to speak of a Rabbinic religion than of an Old Testament religion. Certain religious conclusions and achievements had been won in the Old

Testament period which were never again let go. Thus, for instance, the doctrine of the One God, of pure monotheism, is not fully attained in the Old Testament period till half its span is run, but once attained it is never lost. The comparative religious unity and comparative religious consistency of the Rabbinic period are the result of the travail of the Old Testament period. But it must not be supposed that this comparative unity and consistency mean that the highest points of Old Testament religion are all securely maintained, and that development and variety proceed from these. It is unfortunately not so. The comparative religious consistency and comparative religious unity of the Rabbinic period do not represent throughout the highest religious teachings and the noblest religious conceptions of the Old Testament. They do not, at any rate, include and sum up and represent all those religious teachings and conceptions of the Old Testament which are nearest and most sympathetic to Liberal Judaism.

A gulf separates us to-day from what we may therefore roughly, but not quite illegitimately, call the Rabbinic religion. It would be foolish and inaccurate to ignore this gulf, or to seek to represent it as smaller than it really is.

In some ways we are nearer to Isaiah than we are to Akiba. What is it, then, which causes this separation? What makes the gulf? The gulf is, I take it, mainly caused by two leading Rabbinic conceptions: first, the conception of the Law, and, secondly, the conception of Israel. Rabbinic legalism and Rabbinic particularism are the two main causes of the difference between our religion and theirs.

We know that there were some Jews who were

in the service of Imperial Rome. We know, too, that there were many proselytes to Judaism. We do not, however, know anything about the religious views of such persons, or of what theories they formed and held about the relation of Judaism to the Empire and to the State. Nor, so far as I am aware, do we know anything of the relation of the Jews from this point of view to the Parthian or Sassanid rule. In the Rabbinic literature, though not in Philo, the Jew is a Jew both religiously and nationally. Rome is the enemy: the desire is for its destruction. Not the faintest parallel to the modern position emerges. Thus the gulf in this respect—for it touches religion as well as politics—between us and Rabbinism is very great. We who are English, and want to be nothing less or more, are severed by a great chasm from those who were always looking back as well as forward, and who thought that God cared more for the Jews than He cared for any other race or people in the world. For it is this combination of practical nationalism with religious particularism which separates us off from the Rabbis. Judaism is to us a religion and nothing more; to them it was also the relics of a state that was destroyed, the promise of a state that was to be. God is to us not only One, but in the supremest moral sense, Universal: to them too He was One, but His practical relationship with Israel was not on an ethical par with His theoretic unity.

Nevertheless, there are some points in which Rabbinism is more modern than any part or teacher of the Old Testament, not only in time, but also in idea. It is occasionally much more modern than its Christian contemporaries, or than any Christian teachers up to a comparatively modern era. There

are some points in which we are nearer to Rabbinic Judaism than we are to Isaiah ; there are some points in regard to which we are even closely united with it. In some things our views are its views, developed or purified—not necessarily always the views of the majority of its teachers, but views found in its vast literature more or less incidentally, yet genuinely there, and not elicited from it by exaggeration or homiletic travesty.

And more especially as regards the Law, we may say that, though our view of the Law and the Rabbis' view of the Law constitute, in great measure, the greatness of the gulf between us, yet our view has connections and affiliations with theirs. Our view of the Law, our view of Legalism, is not the ordinary Christian view. Nor is it, historically considered, our own creation. It is a development. It is evolved out of the old view, different though it be.

It is true, as Rabbinic scholars like to point out to us, that "Torah"—both word and thing—is not fully and properly translated by either Law or the Law. Nevertheless, though Torah has a wider connotation than Law or Pentateuch, the divinity of the Torah, to the minds of the Rabbis, fully includes the divinity of the Pentateuch. To all the Rabbis the perfection, Mosaic origin and immutability of the Code contained in the Five Books was an unquestioned dogma. The Pentateuch was not only the first division of the Bible, but incomparably the greatest and the most important. It was God-given in all its parts. Its laws were the outflow of divine wisdom and divine goodness. Even though the reasons for them might not be apparent, it was presumptuous and wicked to question the obligation of their fulfilment. It was needless and even wrong to

ask why did God order the Israelites to abstain for ever from eating pig. It was sufficient for Israelites to know that He it was who did so order them, and then, in loving gratitude and joyful obedience, to fulfil the command.

It is unnecessary to draw out in detail the full measure of the difference between such a view and our own. It is far-reaching and profound. To us the Law is neither Mosaic nor perfect. Instead of the Prophets resting upon the Law, as the Rabbis believed, we know that the Law rested upon the Prophets. The Pentateuch as a whole, and a large portion of the Codes which it includes, are later than the Prophets, and were by no means, as the Rabbis supposed, written down many centuries before them. To the Rabbis the smallest ceremonial enactment was as divine, and in ordinary circumstances as obligatory, as the Ten Commandments themselves. To us many of these ceremonial enactments have only an antiquarian and historic interest. They represent old customs, common in great measure to many tribes and peoples of antiquity, which were incorporated into the codified Law. So far from being the exclusive prerogative of Israel, especially thought out for its benefit by Almighty God, they depend at bottom upon hoary superstitions and practices, which are found among large portions of ancient and uncivilised humanity. In themselves they are by no means peculiar to Israel; they are not part of its distinctive glory and inspiration. The difference between such a view of the Ceremonial Law and the view taken of it by all the Rabbis goes without saying.

Yet in spite of the perfect faith with which, so far as we can make out, all the Rabbis accepted

the dogma of the divinity and perfection of the whole Law, divers problems in regard to it passed before their minds. It was natural that after Paul's attack upon the very conception of Law and Legalism as a whole, some of them, at any rate, should have pondered upon the object of the Law as a means in the divine education of the Jewish people. What is the function of Law in morality and religion? It is clear that some of them had meditated upon this subject. Closely related to it was the purpose or object in particular of the ceremonial sections of the Code book. For this part of it was criticised, and had for long been criticised, by heathen as well as by Christian antagonists and neighbours. The circumcised, pig-hating Jew, refusing to carry a burden or kindle a fire upon the seventh day, was to many a pagan the subject of derision and contempt.

Looking back, as they did, upon the past history of their race, and contemplating the Pentateuch as a whole, the Rabbis were able to reach points of view about the Law which were superior to, and more thoughtful than, anything which we find in the Law book itself. The Code itself, for instance, is silent as to the relation of the moral to the ceremonial ordinances. The strangeness of the greatest command of all—"Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself"—being followed by a trivial injunction about clothes was clearly imperceptible to the compilers of the Code. But though to the Rabbis the obligation to fulfil the ceremonial was no less great than the obligation to fulfil the moral enactments of the Pentateuch, and though upon certain ceremonial enactments, such as circumcision, they laid the most tremendous importance, and

fulfilled them with a peculiar joy, they were nevertheless very well aware of the basic difference between the two classes of laws. And they had clearly advanced far beyond the Pentateuchal position in ridding their minds of superstition. They did not believe that any of the ritual laws had a sort of magical virtue in themselves. Doubtless that lower view existed among the common people for long. But the Rabbis emancipated themselves from it, and their own emancipation gradually filtered downwards. To the populace the Tephillin were charms and amulets, as the Greek translation of the word sufficiently indicates. To the populace the ashes of the red cow acted as sheer magic; the waters of purification were a conjuring trick. But to the Rabbis all these enactments were the arbitrary, and yet the gracious, decrees of God. In His own inscrutable wisdom, and for the benefit of His people, He had chosen to institute these commands. They were not magical sacraments, and when the Temple fell, all of them that remained in force needed no priesthood for their continual observance. Nor did the execution of them exercise the smallest compulsion upon the will of God. That remained as free and as unfettered as before. Nor did the observance of them by man give any pleasure to God except in so far as God takes pleasure in the obedience of His children. The ceremonial laws were devised for man's benefit and not for God's benefit, to influence man's will, not to influence or to constrain the will of God. They were given to man as instruments to lead to his sanctification; as reminders and aids to his obedience, discipline and self-control; as vehicles of spiritual happiness and religious joy; as outward forms to

make life beautiful and holy ; as protections against passion and sin.

It is in these ways of looking at the ceremonial Law that threads of connection and points of contact exist between Rabbinic and Liberal Judaism. One must be definite and honest. We have not the same point of vantage as our forefathers. The Law cannot be to us what it was to them. It cannot help us as it helped them. For if you once believe that God Himself, most solemnly, definitely and directly, ordered you to do, or to refrain from doing, a certain act, your attitude towards that command is not the same as that of the man who chooses to fulfil the command, but does not believe that God Himself is its direct and immediate author. Liberal Jews are in the position of that other man. In so far, our observance, let us say, of the Law of unleavened bread, or of the Mezuzot, or of abstention from food on the Day of Atonement, or of any other dietary law, can never be the same thing to us as to our *believing* orthodox brethren. (I emphasise the word *believing*, for there are many orthodox persons who *observe* but do not *believe*, and their case seems to me the weakest, and religiously the least potent, of the three.)

Yet there is nothing in the principles of Liberal Judaism which should, or which does, prevent us from observing historic rules and laws which appear to us to tend towards the religious ennoblement of our lives, which appear to us to act in the direction of discipline, sanctification or beauty. In each case we shall ask whether the balance of advantage lies in the continuance, or the abandonment, of the particular injunction. But in the *principle* of the observance of ceremonial rules and ordinances, in so far as the

root idea at the bottom of the rule or ordinance is not in conflict with the fundamental doctrines of our religion, we shall be in agreement. We have no quarrel with ceremonial ordinances as such; we do not consider that man is above them or beyond them. Thus the abstention from leavened food during Passover, or from all food during the Day of Atonement, does not conflict with any fundamental doctrine of our religion. We may fitly and wisely continue the observance. That a person called Cohen should not enter a house in which there is a corpse does conflict with such doctrines (for we deny both the distinction between priest and layman and the theory of clean and unclean), and therefore we most properly refuse to maintain the ordinance, and we violate it consciously and of purpose.

The multiplicity of laws was to the Rabbis a cause for congratulation. The more laws, the more honour. God's gracious love for Israel was shown in the number of ordinances that were given to it. Its life was made beautiful and distinctive at every turn by statutes and enactments. Always there were reminders of God: something to be done in conscious obedience to His holy will, in joyful gratitude for His peculiar love; something to be done which others did not do; something to be done which turned the common metal of life into gold, which illuminated the drab commonplace of everyday existence with a delightful and heavenly light. Such was the theory, and, to some extent, such was the practice. *Suum cuique.* Each religion, or each phase of each religion, has its peculiar delights and excellences. This particular theory of the Law Liberal Judaism cannot accept. We cannot any longer say, "The more laws, the merrier." In the

multiplicity of enactments we can no longer recognise a sign of the divine favour. We can, however, appreciate the conception of laws and observances as a means of sanctification. And we can observe that the theory and practice of the Law enabled the Rabbis to reach a conception of life which is characteristic of *their* Judaism, and may well remain a characteristic of ours.

The occupations and actions of a man's life are to be sanctified by divine laws. In other words, they are to be sanctified by religion. Earthly life is exalted and transfigured. From rising out of bed till a return to bed, divine laws are to accompany man in his daily pursuits. Thus life is no longer ugly or common : laws make it beautiful and divine. Laws sanctify man's animal instincts and passions. The deeds they prompt become deeds which can be wrought to the glory of God. Eating and drinking, and the occasions of family and sexual life, are glorified and de-animalised by the Torah. The crude and raw material of human existence is made beautiful by the ordinances of God. Earthly life is not an evil, but a good : it is given by God for man's welfare and enjoyment, for his discipline and happiness. It is, indeed, a preparation for another life ; a vestibule that leads to the hall ; but it is not *merely* a preparation, it is also an end in itself. No human action need be regarded as common or profane which can be ennobled and associated with a Law. The very make and environment of human life are no longer to be depreciated as material. The material is a vehicle for the spiritual. The two form together a higher and inseparable unity.

Such seems to be the Rabbinic theory of life—a much more developed, more conscious and more

satisfying theory than anything to be found in the Hebrew Scriptures. And this theory is still ours. We too are optimists like the Rabbis. We too, though, like the Rabbis, we may have seen and experienced great evils, do not despair of life. We too do not throw all our hopes into the expectation of another life, but we are keen about, and we believe in, the sanctification and the amelioration of *this* life. We too seek to make daily life beautiful by religion and the sense of God.

The Old Testament had left the theory of material prosperity rather open. It was one of the ragged edges of which I spoke before. We know how a somewhat too cursory reading both of the Old Testament and the New had caused a great Englishman to evolve the well-known epigram: "Prosperity is the blessing of the Old Testament, adversity is the blessing of the New." There is, however, about as much truth in this epigram as in most epigrams. The Rabbis materially deepened the conception both of prosperity and adversity, and they accomplished this deepening by the Law. We no longer use their means, but we still largely maintain their result. The joys of earth are not impure because they are temporary. Prosperity is still a blessing, but it must be the prosperity, not of the animal, but of the man—the man, that is, who, on an animal basis, can erect a fabric which has touches and gleams of the divine. The Rabbinic doctrine, which thanks and blesses God for the sight of a beautiful tree or for the enjoyment of a good dinner, which seeks to surround family duties and ordinary occupations with enactments and ordinances, embodies and rests upon a profound conception. It attempts, at one and the same time, to determine the quality

of human actions and to give them a peculiar distinction and glory. Take the simple instance of the good dinner. Religion is not merely to glorify the dinner by making man grateful to God, the giver of good, the creator and sustainer of life. Religion is also to make man temperate. He must enjoy as a man and not as an animal. Moderation, self-control, simplicity, absence of waste, decency in speech and behaviour—all these the *religious* good dinner of the Law prompts and demands. Honesty in business, the duties as well as the rights of property—these too are demanded and stimulated by the religion of the Law. And in this close association of religion with life, in this moral purification and spiritual ennoblement of life by religion, Liberal Judaism takes over, continues, and will, I trust, strengthen, vivify and develop, the Rabbinic ideal.

We have seen that Liberal Judaism differs widely from Rabbinic Judaism in its views about the Pentateuchal Law. And, in practice, Liberal Judaism has asserted the obsoleteness of very many enactments of which Rabbinic Judaism demanded the strict and the faithful observance. Yet, as I have said, the idea of Law in religion binds the two phases of Judaism—the old phase and the new—together. Liberal Judaism maintains the view that man can never be completely a law unto himself; that he can never dispense with the idea of compulsion and of an "ought"; that there is a law, which is not only within him, but without; that this Law "ought" to be obeyed; that man is never completely free. Even to the best men a fresh struggle may occur; and this struggle means a recognition that there exists a Law which says "Do" or "Do not," which "ought" to be obeyed, but

which a "lower" part of the self desires to throw over and repudiate.

The recognition of the binding and authoritative Law is the mark of humanity: above the animal; below the God. So long as man is upon the earth, he can only approach nearer, but he cannot reach, the stage when there will be absolute and constant correspondence between what he wants to do and what he knows he ought to do. In the Messianic Age, according to the prophet, the Law will be written upon the heart. At its advent, external Law —the very sense of any momentary or passing conflict between Law and Desire—may disappear. But the Messiah and the Messianic Age have not yet come: they are in the dim and distant future! Till then there is the Rule of Law.

In that sense Liberal Judaism is still legal.

The Rabbinic literature appears to contain certain adumbrations of the doctrine just enunciated. Paul censures the Law because it stimulates the desire of disobedience. A Rabbi praises it for the very same reason! It is just possible that the praise is a deliberate reply to the censure. Not to eat pig is not enough. One should have the desire to eat it, and yet one should refrain. In this concrete paradox the Rabbi meant, I fancy, to indicate that the very object of the Law is to engender, first, the conflict, and, secondly, the higher obedience which the conflict is to produce. The victory over desire is the glory of man. There can be no true victory without struggle: there can be no inward struggle without the conscious opposition between duty and desire. If you refrain from eating pig without effort, what moral good is yours? It is the conquest, the gradually easier and easier conquest,

of the desire to sin, which creates the moral personality, and constitutes the peculiar greatness, as also the distinctive glory, of man. No battle, no victory; no struggle, no crown. The Rabbis would have been in complete sympathy with that famous sentence of Milton in his *Areopagitica* where he says: "I cannot praise a fugitive and cloistered virtue, unexercised and unbreathed, that never sallies out and sees her adversary, but slinks out of the race where that immortal garland is to be run for, not without dust and heat."

Hence the importance to the Rabbis of the negative commands, the many restraints and prohibitions, the countless "do not's," in which the Written and the Oral Laws abound. It is true that the ideal is to *like* to do, and to be, good—we are all with Aristotle in that—but the Rabbinic notion was that you cannot reach the highest stage without passing through the lower. A mere instinctive taste for goodness is not the highest that man can attain; the highest is the deliberate and rational love of the good for its own sake. And that comes from struggle and discipline: from a painful and reluctant obedience to an obedience, which, like God's obedience to His own nature, is immediate and joyful, but also consciously willing and perfectly free.

Goodness for its own sake was essentially a Rabbinic ideal; yet it was recognised that it could not be achieved at once. It is no little remarkable that, though the Rabbis lay as much stress upon rewards and punishments as the writers of the Old Testament, they rose to the conception of, and invented a nomenclature for, disinterested virtue Here too they pass beyond Old Testament limits,

and here too Liberal Judaism can learn from them and agree with them. The Rabbinic word, "lishmah," "for its own sake," is a fine religious creation, of which apologists and defenders of Rabbinic religion may very justly be proud. To fulfil the Law joyously and "*lishmah*" is the ideal. In fact, if "*lishmah*," then of necessity in joy; if in joy, then also "*lishmah*." The joy of the Commandments is the reward of the Commandments; it is caused by, and involved in, doing them for their own sake. So too *we* agree that joyous duty for its own sake, neither for earthly nor for heavenly reward, is the consummation of morality. Nevertheless, the sense of duty first; the realisation of its obligation: first, be a slave of duty, and realise your bondage; then, be a son of duty, and realise your freedom. First, submit with a struggle; then, submit with joy. The Law is without you, and it constrains; you obey it, but not *lishmah*: but it is also within you; more and more you realise that it is *your* law, the law of your being; you accept it more and more freely; more and more you perform it joyously, lovingly, for its own sake, *lishmah*. This passage or development seems to be not merely accurate, but also valuable. We should maintain it and aim at it. We need to preserve, according to both Liberal and Rabbinic Judaism, the compulsive nature of duty, its disinterestedness and its joy. And all this we do by the doctrine of the Law which is both without and within, God's law and man's law too, and by the doctrine of *lishmah*.

It would seem as if Theistic religions had to oscillate between two statements, and from both of them obtain fruit and truth. The first is, "Man is akin to God." The second is, "Man is not God."

It may, perhaps, be said that, upon the whole, the Old Testament and the Rabbinic literature tend to give more habitual emphasis to the second than to the first. The Law was given to man for his joy and his glory: but it was also given for his discipline and sanctification. It was given to man because he needs it, because he *is* lower than God, lower than the angels. Only through the Old Covenant and in the keeping of it—not by its abrogation and disregard—can he step forward into the New.

The Law, according to Rabbinic teaching, is not the strength of sin, but a protection against sin. We too share this view though we translate it into more modern terms. The consciousness, the conviction, that the moral Law is both God's Law and my Law, not merely mine and not merely His, help me to fulfil it. If it were only a mere arbitrary Law of the stronger—to be executed on pain of punishment and hope of reward—I should have no inward desire to perform its enactments; I should not bow down in willing surrender to its compulsion, and do glad homage to its majesty. If it were merely the Law of my own being, however much I might recognise that in its fulfilment I best realised myself, I might be more indifferent to its commands. Why should I not do as I please with my own will? But it is in the combination of its aspects—God's Law is my Law, and my Law is God's Law; the Law within is the Law without, and the Law without is the Law within—that its seductive compulsiveness lies. Here is the secret of its success; the key to its sweet and persuasive constraint; here is the reason for the realisation that bondage to the Law is also the highest freedom,

and that he who is the most devoted servant of God is also His child, that servitude is liberty and submission is independence.

Thus to us too, adherents of Liberal Judaism, the Law is still precious. It is a symbol of our free surrender to the God who is our Master and our Father, joyful acknowledgment that His will must be ours. The Law, we admit, does, in one sense, create sin. If we had no consciousness of right, we should have no consciousness of wrong. The acceptance of the Law implies the possibility of breaking it. But, in a higher sense, the Law helps us, as the Rabbis taught and rightly taught, to dominate the evil inclination, and to resist its solicitations. If we do wrong because of the Law, much more do we do right. The Law pulls us up, and drives us forward, by its attractiveness. Majestic and beautiful, winning and severe, it is, after all, only God Himself, revealing to us His will, and beckoning to us on the way. The sense of wrongdoing is the consciousness of the violated Law : but that very Law itself, because it is divine, creates the balsam for the wound which it has made. In adoring it we are helped to obey it. Our worship of it prompts to its fulfilment.

We may next ask how far the intellectual element in the Rabbinic legalism can still appeal to us. Has Liberal Judaism any links with Rabbinism in this particular ? We recall the immense stress laid by the Rabbis upon the study of the Law. Much of this study seems to us to-day to have been largely futile. Our estimate of the worth of the Pentateuch and of the Mishnah is so different from theirs that it is not even easy to transport ourselves to their point of view. It has become strange to us and remote. "Turn it and turn it again," they said, "for

all is in it." We are very far indeed from believing that all is in it; we are very far from believing that all that is in it has a permanent and abiding value. I should imagine that large portions of the Talmud might be unstudied for ever, without humanity being the worse, or its progress diminished or retarded by a single hour.

But apart from the particular object of our study, how far do we believe that study is necessary in religion generally? We have, I think, to distinguish two separate parts of the problem. Any religion is, or will become, in a bad case if it has no men of learning among its adherents. Every religion needs its students as well as its saints. It needs head as well as heart, brain as well as feeling. The learning of the student must gradually filter down into the many. The thinkers must keep the religion in contact with all the best knowledge of the day. They must consider the effects upon it of scientific enquiry and historic investigation. They must maintain and develop its theology, keep it vital, and make it responsive to the needs of each generation as it arises. The philosophers and thinkers must see to it that the religion acquires a form and a presentment suited to the intellectual needs of the age, that it is a religion which can satisfy the few as well as the many, the wise and the enquiring as well as the simple and the pure of heart. Just as the university is necessary for the well-being of elementary education, so are the theological seminary and the men of learning and of thought necessary for the well-being of religion. On this side of the question it is unnecessary to dwell. Almost everybody would agree with Rabbinic Judaism here. Nor can we deny that it was study, and the value placed upon

study, which kept Judaism alive through the weary sequence of the centuries from the fall of Jerusalem to the advent of the emancipation era. It was study, and it was the student, who prevented the degradation of the Jews to a horde of illiterate and mind-stricken outcasts with no faith in themselves and with no inward regenerative power. Judaism owes its preservation, and the Jews owe their fresh vitality, to the study of the Law. It was this study which gave them, and maintained for them, a spiritual ideal. Even in the worst times there was always something better than the mere keeping of body and soul together, something better than the acquisition of money with which to buy off the persecutions of Christian rulers and the malignity of the Christian Church. There was always a spiritual end, a spiritual ideal—the study of the Law. That study was, indeed, Israel's strength and Israel's consolation, its sanctification and its joy. And Liberal Judaism must look to it that the importance of study and of an adequate number of students is continuously recognised, that our religion is still kept fresh and vital and growing, still capable of satisfying educated men and women in every age. Moreover, study and learning preserve idealism : they are a high and necessary corrective to materialism and the service of mammon : they prevent the corruption of the Jews as well as the corruption of Judaism. They are as useful a part of our equipment as social service or charitable institutions.

But all this is only one side of the matter. Rabbinic Judaism went further. The religion was kept alive and developed by students, and it was students who wrote the literature which we read. They magnify their craft, and they tend to exalt and exaggerate their own importance. They tend

occasionally to look down upon the ignorant, and to identify piety with learning. In these exaggerations we part company with them. It is not necessary now to point out that a true love of God and of man may be associated with a very minute modicum of knowledge. Most of us know many very good people who are anything but learned, and even anything but wise. A saintly clodhopper and a pious simpleton are not necessarily contradictions in terms.

Nevertheless, there is something to be said upon the other, upon the Rabbinic, side. Hillel's saying: "An empty-headed man cannot be a sin-fearing man, nor can an ignorant man be pious," taken literally, is false. But, taken with grains of salt, it has its measure of truth. Religion and Judaism call for the mind as well as the heart. Intelligence must be given to the service of righteousness and of God as well as kindness. Love without insight may make many a mistake. The foolish saint may be a reality, but the wise saint is the ideal. It is not without justification that the first prayer in the famous "*Amidah*" is for understanding. How without it can we appreciate the relative values of things or the true relations of man to God and of God to man? Mere feeling is not adequately human: religion is by no means a mere matter of the emotions. In his account of the German theologian Schleiermacher, Dr. McGiffert says: "He recognised that thinking and feeling cannot be divorced, and that the religious man inevitably thinks about his religious experiences, and instinctively strives to give them some sort of intellectual expression. Empty-headedness and thoughtlessness consort least of all with devoutness. You will never call him pious, said Schleiermacher, who goes about with his mind closed in stupidity and with

no openness of vision for the world's life."[1] This, to a large extent, is an accurate, if modernised, representation of the Rabbinic position, and it is certainly the position of Liberal Judaism to-day. We too may rightly wage war upon stupidity, and especially upon the stupidity which seeks to shelter itself under the guise or mantle of religion; we too may demand in all matters of religious development, whether in practice or in theory, "openness of vision for the world's life." So we too may repeat the ancient prayer with a lively faith: "Thou favourest man with knowledge, and teachest mortals understanding. O favour us with knowledge, understanding and discernment from Thee. Blessed art Thou, O Lord, gracious Giver of Knowledge." The intellectual element in religion, upon which we, like our forefathers, lay stress, is a heritage from the wise men of the Old Testament and from the Rabbis of the Talmud. With due reserves we will be careful to maintain it.

Thus far we have only spoken of the *Law*—in one or other of its many aspects. For in any consideration of Rabbinic Judaism or of its relation to any other phase of type of the Jewish religion, it is correct and inevitable that by far the largest place should be occupied by the Law. The Law is the central feature of Rabbinic Judaism, and hence the Law must be the central feature in any discussion of the relation of Rabbinic Judaism to Liberal Judaism.

A few words must, however, be said of other matters. And first as to the Rabbinic conception of God's relation to man, and of man's to God. Apart from the particularism of Rabbinic Judaism, on which I do not propose to dwell, what must be

[1] *The Rise of Modern Religious Ideas* (1915), p. 75.

noted is that the Rabbinic conception of God, and therefore of His relation to man, is frankly old-fashioned in the sense that God's personality and individuality are very strongly emphasised. No philosophical considerations gave the Rabbis pause, any more than they gave pause to Jesus, or at an earlier age to Hosea. God knows Himself as God. Omnipotent though He may be, He is yet sharply distinguished, and distinguishes Himself, from the world which He has made and which He rules. To Israel, and to the Israelite, He is King and Father in the very fullest sense of the words. He cares and loves. He helps and forgives. He punishes and rewards. The Israelite prays to Him, in the fullest conviction that there is Somebody who hears and responds to his prayers. The greatest Rabbis, or rather all the Rabbis, small and great, thought of God in the same simple personal way as Jesus did, or as any simple man or woman does to-day, to whom the words immanence, transcendence, self-consciousness, mean nothing, but to whom the words, "caring," "hearkening," "loving," "Father," "Helper" and "Friend," mean a very great deal.

Yet every religion must have its philosophers and its philosophic theologians, and any religion is in evil case which does not possess them. It is for Liberal Jewish philosophers to take the ordinary Liberal Jewish conception of God and of His relation to man, and to deepen and to purify it. They must seek, not indeed to prove it, for I take it that in the ordinary sense of the word the existence of God is not provable, but at all events, to correlate it with their whole conception of the universe, and to show that it is a conception which is reasonable, consistent and profound.

But while this is the work, and the urgent work, for our philosophers to do, I venture to believe even now, and with the work of the philosophers outstanding and undone, that if Judaism is to continue, the Jewish conception of God must continue likewise. It is very daring, and perhaps it is foolish and illiberal, to put limits to the development of man's conception of the divine Being. Nor will I do this. I will only put limits—and that very tentatively—to the flexibility of Judaism. I am inclined to believe that no religion can rightly call itself Judaism—be the prefixed adjective what it may—wherein God does not remain a Being to whom the worshipper can pray, and whom he may not still legitimately call, "our Father and King." God must still, if not reward and punish, at all events, rule and care and help and love. And the love of God for man must be answered by the love of man for God. Far be it from me to suggest that Judaism should clip the wings of human speculation, or to predict its results; my contention is simply this, that a religion whose God can no longer honestly be conceived as Father and King, ruling, caring, loving, may indeed be the religion of the future, but that it could not be called Judaism. In Rabbinic Judaism the adjective represents the Law. Abandon the Law in the Rabbinic sense, and the adjective falls. But the substantive remains. And Liberal Judaism may flourish, though Rabbinic Judaism may crumble away. But abandon God in the sense defined, and it is not the adjective which falls, but the noun. It is no longer a question of Rabbinic or Liberal: it is a question of Judaism. With the Father and King to pray to, with the Father and King to reverence and love, it stands or it falls.

Under these circumstances there is much in the Rabbinic conception of God's relation to man, and of man's to God, which Liberal Judaism can find fruitful to study, to adopt and to enlarge. And it may be noted that particularist and national though the Rabbinic conception on the whole may be, it is also broadly human. By this I mean that when the Rabbinic teachers turned away from, or were not thinking of, the distinction between Israel and the nations, or the oppression of Israel by the heathen world, they often speak quite simply of man as man. Sometimes even they almost imply that it is with the man as such, and not with the man as an Israelite, that God enters into relations. At any rate, their conceptions of God's relation to man, and of man's to God, can often still be used by us, and are often still helpful to us, even though our views as to God's relations to *Israel* are very different from theirs.

It is impossible to deal with, or speak of, these views in detail. It is sufficient to say that, so far as God's rule and fatherhood, His righteousness and compassion, His response to prayer and repentance, are concerned, there is little in which Liberal Judaism need deviate from, and there is much in which it can agree with, the teaching of the Rabbis. We need not go to the Gospels for the conception of a loving Father, who grieves over human sin, and is ready to welcome the penitent sinner. The mass of the Gentiles may have learnt these conceptions from the Gospels: the Jews learnt them from their own teachers, along their own lines. Only in so far as the unrepentant sinner is concerned do we push the love of God further, and demand more from its working, than the Rabbis. God to us is the Father of the sinner as well as of the saint.

More important are our deflections from, or developments of, their doctrine in respect of the conceptions of forgiveness, punishment and reward. On these subjects, in spite of occasional brilliant flashes (such as the familiar, "The reward of a sin is a sin, the reward of a transgression is a transgression") their teaching is still too outward for our modern judgment. They still cling too closely, for the most part, to the clumsy methods of proportion and tit for tat. We do not ask that the outward issues of our sin may not befall us. We have a deeper view of atonement and a more far-reaching conception of law. Yet we are grateful to the Rabbis for the steps they took—even though we have gone further upon the same road—to transform the priestly and partly superstitious ceremony described in the sixteenth chapter of Leviticus into the most spiritual day consecrated to religious observance in the calendar of any religious denomination. And the Rabbinic teaching about repentance—one of the brightest jewels in their crown—still remains, for the most part, valid and inspiring for us Liberal Jews to-day. Reward and punishment we look at with different eyes: yet we too hold that the effects of sin are evil, and the effects of righteousness are good, and that these effects are of God's institution and will. We too hold that there is a correspondence or relation—ultimate and in the nature of things—between righteousness and happiness, and also between misery and sin. In that deeper and more fundamental sense we too believe that God punishes and rewards.

As regards the relation of man to God, Rabbinic Judaism co-ordinated and made more definite the teachings of the Old Testament. Two points are worthy of mention, for both are important, and both

may still be maintained by Liberal Judaism to-day. The Old Testament had bidden men fear God and bidden men love Him. It had made, and had become conscious of, no contrast between these two emotions and commands, nor had it declared that the one was greater than the other. The religious perceptions of the Rabbis became more delicate and alert. Their psychology was more developed, and to them the possible contrast between fear and love was quite apparent. Nevertheless, they were not inclined to dispense wholly with fear. Their fear was doubtless what we call reverence, though they did not get so far as, and were not able, to coin a special word for that higher and purer form of fear which is alone applicable to God. In a familiar Rabbinic passage it is said that man must both fear God and love Him; he must both rejoice and tremble in the fulfilment of the divine commands. On the other hand, it is freely recognised and carefully stated that love is higher than fear, and it is argued that the excellence of fear is that it may lead on to love. Even as the divine commands are to be fulfilled from a lower motive, so that they may at last be fulfilled from the highest motive ("*lishmah*," for their own sake), so is a man to fear God in order that he may end by loving Him. Liberal Judaism does well, I think, to maintain this teaching, and not to abandon fear (or reverence) in its insistence upon love. The late Dr. Frankl once preached a sermon in which Mahommedanism was described as the one-sided religion of Fear, Christianity as the one-sided religion of Love, and Judaism as the complete and balanced religion of both Love and Fear. However this may be as regards the two other religions, it is accurate as regards Judaism. In respect of our relation neither to our earthly nor to our

heavenly Father is it necessarily true that perfect love should, or does, cast out a measure of reverential fear. Awe before the divine holiness is helpful in the development of our own.

No less noticeable than the Rabbinic combination of fear and love is its creation of that religious motive for human action which they call "*Kiddush ha' Shem*," the Sanctification of the Name. It was a motive which operated very powerfully both positively and negatively; leading to the avoidance of certain sins so as not to profane the Name, to the performance of certain virtuous and heroic deeds (martyrdom being the salient example) in order to sanctify it. There is every reason why this fine creation of Rabbinic Judaism should be maintained by ourselves. So long as the conception of God is fully ethical, the conception of the sanctification of His name will be thoroughly ethical as well. All men may rightly desire to glorify God by their devotion to righteousness. The living principle and source of righteousness are sanctified by the vindication of righteousness, at the cost of suffering and sacrifice, by God's human children. But the sanctification of God's holy name and nature is especially fitted to be a Jewish motive of conduct when it is brought into close connection with the conception of Israel as the servant and witness of God. Appointed by God Himself to be the witnesses and confessors of His Unity and Righteousness, the Jews pollute their charge and its author by their sin; they sanctify Him by their virtue. Sin in them is peculiarly reprehensible: self-sacrifice and the passion of goodness are peculiarly incumbent and appropriate. It is for the Jews to show that the highest goodness springs from the love of God, and may be wrought with the direct purpose to glorify and sanctify His

name. Like the principle of "*Kevanah*," or devotion in prayer, which is also a noble creation of the Rabbis, the doctrine of "*Kiddush ha' Shem*" appears to add a certain fragrance or distinction to their religion for which we may be duly grateful, and which we must be careful by no means to let drop. It is in these delicacies of the spirit, quite as much as in more specific dogmas, that the essence or distinctiveness of a religion can be displayed.

There are several other Rabbinic doctrines which we shall find stimulating and sympathetic even in our own age. They will fit on to, and combine with, our own conception of Liberal Judaism. It may be only a thought here, a casually-thrown-out teaching there, but though unsystematic, undeveloped and occasional, they deserve preservation, and reward the reader. The Old Testament left many edges ragged, and sometimes a Rabbinic saying may show how these ragged edges are to be smoothed. It left many doctrines one-sided and incomplete, and sometimes a Rabbinic saying may show along what lines these incompletenesses may be filled out. Again, there are many noble Biblical conceptions which are, I will not say improved upon, but, at any rate, deepened, illustrated, confirmed by the Rabbis. So we may find, in the vast Rabbinic literature, teachings concerning the omnipresence and nearness of God, or concerning grace and divine assistance, or concerning prayer and repentance, which, all unsystematic as they are, may be appropriated, used and enlarged by us with great profit and advantage. It would be a thousand pities to suffer noble and suggestive teachings of this kind to fall into neglect. The Rabbis, it may be noticed, are often less one-sided than their modern descendants and representatives. They are

not always thinking about Christianity, or making their own religion one-sided and narrow by piling up contrasts between it and the religion of their neighbours. Thus we may find in their teachings some suggestive sayings about asceticism, about faith, about grace and works, which are not often made prominent in the sermons of Jewish preachers of the present day.

Beautiful as, in some respects, is the teaching of the Rabbis concerning the relation of God to Israel and of Israel to God, it never rises to the greatness of the Servant passages in the Babylonian Isaiah. Nevertheless, the mission of Israel is not entirely ignored. There are nasty things in the Talmud and Midrash about proselytes, which we shall do well to forget, but there are also fine and helpful things, which we shall do well to remember. Nor should we forget that an occasional flash shows insight into the highest conception of all. "The whole purpose," says one Rabbi, "of the dispersion of Israel is the making of proselytes." Abraham, to the Rabbis, no less than to Paul, was specially notable for his faith and for his proselytising activities. His great object was to bring all whom he could affect, or get hold of, under the wings of the Shechinah. He is, as it were, the "patron" of proselytes, and his work, though not imitated, is yet looked back upon with admiration and with praise.

Thus the inspiration of the great Biblical teachers did not wholly fail the generations of the Rabbis. And though we to-day reject the formal doctrine of the Oral Law, we cling the closer to, and advocate the more warmly, the doctrine of continuous inspiration. In that sense, and from that point of view, we are all traditionalists. To draw a sharp *dogmatic*

line between Bible and post-Biblical literature is fatal. We stand for the doctrine of the divine inspiration, in various manners and degrees, throughout the ages. The Old Testament is not purely "divine," and the Talmud is not purely "human." The Old Testament may be, and is, a much greater book than the Talmud, but if there is much "humanity," as well as much "inspiration," in the former, there is some "inspiration," if also more "humanity," in the latter. God did not withdraw His help and His Spirit from our forefathers with the close of the Biblical period. He has not—for this too is part of our "case"—withdrawn it from us even to-day.

There is no opportunity here and now to speak of the ethics of the Rabbis, or to discuss how much of their ethical teaching may be adopted by Liberal Judaism. Moreover, there is no need of any special *relation* of our newer phase of Judaism to the older phase in this particular regard. We can freely pick and choose; we can take what is good, and omit or neglect what is inferior. I fancy that, under these circumstances, there will be more taking than neglecting. I do not mean to imply that Rabbinic ethics are perfect, and incapable of development. I do not mean that there is nothing to add or nothing to omit. And lastly, I do not mean that, in framing and pushing forward, if I may use the phrase, our own ethical teaching, we should not consider the ethics of Jesus and Paul as well as the ethics of the Talmud, and profit—for I believe we can—from the study of both. We may find that they are not really opposed, but complementary, to each other. It is easy to get at the ethics of Jesus and Paul. The New Testament is a thin book and

is accessible to all. Endless commentaries supply explanation and to spare on any point of difficulty. It is not easy to get at the ethics of the Talmud. There is no good book upon the subject with adequate quotations, and written simply to inform and to tell the truth.

But that there *is* valuable ethical material contained in the huge Rabbinic literature, let no man doubt. And let no man suppose that he can rightly or wisely say, "The Hebrew Bible is enough for me. I do not want more. I do not need the teachings of the Rabbis." In one sense, indeed, you cannot get beyond sayings like, "I desire love and not sacrifice." "What does the Lord require of thee, but to do justice, and love mercy, and walk humbly with thy God?" "Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself." But the Rabbinic teaching fills these great forms of morality with noble content.

And it is in its details, in its applications of the Old Testament principles, that its advance and its value mainly consist. Rabbinic morality may be called a workaday morality, a common-sense morality, and yet it is shot through with idealism. Just this combination makes it distinctive and even modern. In the domain of charity it will speak in quite a modern way of the excellence of independence, and how it may be better to lend than to give, but it will give rules about communal charity which are touching in their delicacy, and it will declare that the one unforgivable sin is putting one's neighbour to shame or raising a blush upon his cheeks. Indeed the word "delicacy," thus incidentally used, is perhaps a chief characteristic of Rabbinic ethics. For new and far-reaching idealism, for driving passion and enthusiasm, we must go rather to Jesus than

to the Rabbis. But in moral delicacy and wisdom there is much to be appropriated from the Rabbinical literature, much to be transplanted from their environment into ours, much to be adopted from them and adapted. Sometimes this delicacy of theirs may become as hard for some of us to follow as the command to pray for the welfare of our enemies! Do many of us, for instance, find it easy, if we have no intention or power of buying, to refrain from looking too curiously at the contents of an attractive shop? And yet, if we do not refrain, we violate a Rabbinical command! In several points it may be found that the Rabbis and Jesus join hands. Most notably would this be the case in the delicacies of almsgiving. "Let not thy right hand know what thy left hand does" is a most characteristically Rabbinic injunction, and still more characteristic is it that the Rabbis carefully work out the principle into a number of excellent and very practical applications.

Summing up, we may, then, justly say that the Rabbis did undoubtedly smooth some of the religious and moral edges which had been left rough and ragged by the Old Testament teachers. In other cases they made contributions towards a subsequent smoothing. In others they made no advance, and perhaps in one or two things, such as the relation of ritual to morality in religion, they fall below the highest Old Testament attainment. In conclusion, what may we say as to their contribution to the eternal problems of suffering and of evil?

We must not expect any elaborate or well-thought-out theodicy from the Rabbinical literature. The Rabbis do not seem to have had capacity and taste for philosophic enquiry. Nothing systematic

in ethics or theology has been by them given to the world. Therefore, as regards all the deepest questions which perplex the human mind, we get occasional fine ideas and helpful thoughts from them; little more. Yet as compared with the Old Testament there is a distinct advance, mainly due to the doctrine of the Resurrection and the Blessed Life beyond the grave. For this doctrine, once thoroughly believed in, was bound to throw new light upon, and provide new interpretations for, all the problems of human destiny and of suffering. This is the case both with the New Testament and with the Rabbinic literature. In both we find an ennoblement of suffering over the limit reached in the Hebrew Scriptures.

The Rabbis teach that their best possessions have, or will, come to the Israelites through suffering. They develop the few sayings in the Old Testament which regard suffering as a discipline. Suffering purifies. The chastisements, or sufferings, of love become with them a familiar conception. Sometimes Israel's special and peculiar sufferings, as compared with the prosperity of its oppressors, suggest the theory that Israel's "good turn" is to be in the next world, while the good time of its enemies is limited to this world. But there are also higher thoughts about suffering than this, though no religion which really believes in a future life will, I should fancy, ever be able to dispense with that particular consolation. All such believers will continue to find in the higher peace, and fuller knowledge, and more constant happiness, of "heaven" an explanation, a compensation and a comfort for the measure of their sorrows and agonies upon earth. Yet, even apart from that other world, the Rabbis produced

some fine thoughts about suffering. It was better, they said, to belong to the persecuted than to those who persecute. Why is it better? They do not tell us or attempt to explain: but they felt—and we feel too—that suffering goodness is a finer and grander and better thing than prosperous vice. They said that we must thank God for the evil as well as for the good. Why must we do so? They do not say. But they felt—and we feel too—that if God is really good, and really our Father, then all that happens to us, however dark and inexplicable it may be, is yet within the orbit of His will. They felt that it was grander, and made man grander, to believe in God, and to be grateful to Him, in the midst of calamity than in the midst of prosperity. They recalled again and again the words of Akiba, who declared that it was a high privilege to love God with all our heart and with all our life. Akiba said this in his martyrdom, and the Rabbis would make it apply to all suffering and sorrow and pain. More especially is all suffering which may exhibit the sanctification of the Divine Name, all suffering of the Jew as a Jew, and because of, or for the sake of, his Judaism, ennobled and glorified. In the Psalter we get the earliest expression of conscious suffering for the sake of God. The Maccabean writer exclaims, "For thy sake are we killed all day long." But the exclamation is also a complaint, in some sort an accusation. The religious advance in Akiba's martyrdom is great. He neither complains nor accuses. On the contrary. He smiles; he rejoices. And thus, perhaps, the most famous and familiar utterance in all the Talmud speaks of those who rejoice in their sufferings as the lovers of God, who are as the sun when he goes forth in his might. It is true that this

rejoicing in suffering is often related to the ideas that through suffering man obtains forgiveness, or that the suffering is somehow related to sin, or that suffering is the means by which is won the blessedness of the world to come. And if this blessedness is caused by the *purification* produced by suffering, the idea is surely not unethical. Thus, in one way or another, the exaltation of suffering is there, and we can maintain and develop the thought, while carefully freeing it from any lurking impurity.

One important aspect of suffering seems, however, curiously absent from the Rabbinical literature. There is little in it—so far as I have been able to see—of the conception of self-sacrifice for the sake, not of God, but of one's fellow-men. The supremest chapter in Isaiah—I mean the fifty-third—is made little use of. That we are to bear one another's burdens, that we are to endure pain and sorrow for others—for our family, our community, our country, or for humanity—and that this interconnection of one with all, this voluntary self-sacrifice for others, is one of the greatest ennoblements of suffering—is an idea which we meet with in the New Testament and in the Stoics, but which seems absent from the Rabbis. But Liberal Jews can adopt and develop it from the sources where they can find it. It links itself on with complete consistency to the purest Judaism.

Yet though the idea of voluntary sacrifice for others does not seem to be directly taught in the way in which we are familiar with it, it appears to be implicit in certain Rabbinic conceptions which played a considerable part in their theological and religious teaching. "All Israelites," declared the Rabbis, "are responsible for one another." This assertion does, at all events, indicate that we are bound to bear one

another's burdens, whether we like it or no. The Rabbis believed that the virtues, if not the sins, of a man exercised a peculiar influence upon the fortunes of his neighbour. The wicked do not condemn the righteous, but the righteous do, to some extent, justify or acquit the wicked. It is said that God created the good and the bad, so that the one should atone for the other. Again, it is said those who have knowledge of the Law, but do no good works; those who do works, but have no knowledge; those who are distinguished, and those who fail, in both one excellence and the other—all atone for each other. The death of the righteous exercises an atoning force as strong as that of *Yom Kippur* itself. With some modifications, enlargements and purifications we may still use these conceptions in our own day.

Metaphysical explanations of suffering and evil are foreign to Rabbinic thought. It is not in our power, they say, to explain either the prosperity of the wicked or the adversity of the good. It was difficult for the Rabbis to get rid of the doctrine of retribution and tit for tat. They were always much too inclined to try and find it somewhere and somehow, and often in ways and by methods which are mechanical, arbitrary and even childish. In these matters we have left their thought far behind, and it is no longer of use to us. Yet even here they now and then rise startlingly above their own habitual theories. There is no more dramatic passage in the Talmud than the story of the twofold vision vouchsafed to Moses, in which he first sees the wonders of Akiba's pious learning, and then sees its reward—the great teacher dying under the most appalling torture. Moses exclaims in horror, "Such learning and such reward!" "Silence," answers God, "such is My decree."

If it cannot be said that the Rabbis devised, or hit upon, any theories which, in a consistent manner, solve, or even attempt to solve, the perennial problems, they help us a little by their perception of the difficulties with which Old Testament teaching has left us. They are not, for instance, unconscious of the contradiction between the Second Word and the accentuated individualism of Ezekiel. They seek to harmonise the one with the other by suggesting that it is only upon those children and grandchildren who are themselves wicked that the sins of their progenitors are visited. They are constantly at work to magnify God's mercy, and to diminish (at least so far as Israel is concerned !) the measure of His retribution and severity. They seize upon Old Testament germs and develop them. Thus the merits of the Patriarchs—a doctrine known to Deuteronomy —is enlarged by them into a theory which, while not diminishing personal responsibility, yet seeks to give an extra reason for the grace and the compassion of God. We can hardly accept the theory as they present it, but yet it may suggest to us how by spiritual law, and not by arbitrary favour, the virtue of one generation may be used and inherited by another, and it may give us in that way an added stimulus to righteousness and love. Again, the Rabbis, pressing and developing an obscure and corrupt Scriptural verse (Isaiah lxiii. 9), suggest the doctrine of the sympathetic participation of the Divine Being in human suffering and even in human evil. If we are taught by them to bless God for the evil as well as for the good, we are also taught that God Himself suffers with, and through, the sufferings of Israel, and, as we should say, of humanity. How profound, and, perhaps, too, how suggestive,

is that observation of R. Meir: "When a man suffers pain (a euphemism for 'when a criminal is executed'), what does the *Shechinah* say? 'Heavy is my head: heavy is my arm.' If God grieves so much over the blood of the wicked, how much more over the death of the righteous!"

Naturally, these quasi-explanations of suffering and calamity are only very occasional and incidental. The great permanent explanation as regards both the sinner and the saint is the doctrine of the future life. And here it is again well to point out that Liberal Judaism in this matter is in fair accord with Rabbinic Judaism, and is grateful to it for its teaching. I do not mean in accordance with its doctrine of retribution, and obviously still less with its theories of purgatory and hell. I am rather thinking of the effect of the doctrine of the future life upon our estimate of this life. Rabbinic Judaism, upon the whole, appears to hold the balance truly. It does not over-exalt the material world in which we live. It does not seek to exaggerate our attachment to it. Together with its conception of the Law, it uses the conception of the other world in which it fervently believes, to spiritualise the enjoyments and activities of man upon the earth. But, on the other hand, it does not depreciate this world too much. It does not declare that this world is not worth working for, caring for and improving. It looks forward to a Golden Age upon earth as well as to the Life Everlasting in Heaven. It transfigures the joys of sense and sanctifies them: it does not despise them or repudiate them. Though this life may be but the vestibule to the hall, yet Rabbinic Judaism does not deny the presence of God within the vestibule, or cheapen the vestibule improperly for the sake of the

hall. The hall is to throw its light back upon the vestibule, and that light is not to make the vestibule contemptible, but to ennoble it. If the hall has its peculiar happiness, so has the vestibule, and this happiness is neither false nor wrong because it is brief and a prelude. If we draw out the metaphor in this way, and not unfairly represent it as the teaching of Rabbinic Judaism, which is also the teaching of Liberal Judaism, we may also appropriate and expand that other saying of R. Jacob which follows upon the saying about the vestibule and the hall. Here too, I repeat, we may rightly appropriate and expand, and with this deep and glorious saying we may not unfitly take leave of our subject. "Better is one hour of repentance and good deeds in this world than the whole life of the world to come; and better is one hour of blissfulness of spirit in the world to come than the whole life of this world."

IV

LIBERAL JUDAISM AND HELLENISM

THE very title of this chapter may seem to challenge the critic. In this juxtaposition adjective and noun both require justification. For what purpose are Judaism and Hellenism thus brought together? And what specially has *Liberal* Judaism to do with the matter?

I am not thinking primarily of any reconciliation of Hellenism with Judaism in the sense that Judaism is to stand for religion and morality, and Hellenism for art and for culture. Nor am I even primarily thinking of Judaism and Hellenism in the sense in which Matthew Arnold was wont to contrast Hellenism and Hebraism with each other, and to discuss the right amalgamation of the two. One or two of the things he alludes to, some of the points which he makes, may be touched upon or included in that which I shall have to say, but primarily I intend something rather different. I am thinking primarily of religion on both sides: of Hellenic religion—religion produced and taught by men of Greek blood, or by men nurtured on Greek philosophy—as well as of Jewish religion, the religion taught or professed by Jews of the past and of the present, the Jewish religion as it was, as it is, or as it

might be. I shall, I admit, be somewhat broad in my use of terms; religion and religions will embrace a good deal, and ethical conceptions will also be brought in. But they will be brought in for a religious purpose or from a religious point of view.

All this may seem to make my title still more inexplicable. For what has Hellenism to do with religion? Am I going to suggest that Liberal Judaism had better abandon the doctrine of One God, and set up a combined pantheon which shall deal fairly and impartially both with Sinai and Olympus? Are Liberal Jews to worship Zeus as well as Jehovah?

I purposely ask these absurd questions, for I think that they would really represent what many persons must feel as regards the title of this chapter, if Hellenism is to be interpreted to mean anything ethical, anything religious. To those whose attention and reading have not been specially directed to the subject, Hellenism means, I fancy, a parcel of immoral gods and goddesses, on the one hand, a number of beautiful, though often headless, statues upon the other.[1]

The admirable Jewish minister, whose excellent pulpit addresses I used to listen to Saturday after Saturday all my boyhood and youth—and much I learned from him which has become an integral part of my most cherished convictions—was wont to tell us that Israel was not the only people which God had chosen for a particular purpose and for the benefit of the world at large. Israel was chosen to teach the world Religion, Rome to give it Law, and Greece to reveal to it Art. Here the doctrine of the beautiful,

[1] To some it may mean something even worse. "Greatly they misread the mind of Greeee who think to become Hellenic by means of eccentricity tinged with vice" (Butcher, *Some Aspects of the Greek Genius*, p. 1).

if headless, statues was elevated into a sort of theory. Greece is one of three favoured and divinely chosen races—Greece, Israel, Rome; the rest of mankind nowhere. Thus were the divine purposes, and the divine dealings, with mankind, simply and plainly set forth!

Dear, good old Jewish minister! It would be pleasant to hold so clear and definite a creed, and also to believe that it adequately explained the world, and made human history comfortable and easy. To-day it is hardly necessary to indicate its insufficiencies, but here and now we are happily only concerned with its view of the function of ancient Greece. Now to Greece it does much less than justice. For of a truth the Western world, and Western civilisation (which in our pride and self-sufficiency we so often regard as equivalent to the whole world, and to all civilisation—that counts), has learnt from Greece, and can still learn from Greece, much more than to admire some statues, or even to construct a theory of the Beautiful. Greece has not only taught the world how to think, but has given it many an element in noble life. Greece has taught, or can teach, us certain ways of looking at the universe, certain ways of dealing with our fellow-men and with the Power that is above men, which are permanently suggestive, helpful and true. In other words, Greece too, as well as Israel, made its contribution towards religion. Israel gave more, but Greece gave something; and if Greece has more to learn from Israel, Israel has something to learn from Greece.

There is, indeed, a point of view which is much wider than that of my dear old Jewish minister's, but which would yet stop short of what I have just said. Greece, it might be said, from that point of

view, has revealed to man the true theory of the State. Greece revealed and illustrated the conception of ordered freedom, it taught the love of knowledge and its meaning; the need and the right of free enquiry. Greece taught philosophy. It laid the foundations of logic, ethics and politics, and in each of them made contributions of permanent nobility and worth. But all this, great and important as it is, is not yet religion.

To this the reply is twofold. First, if all this is not yet religion, it is very near to religion, and touches religion in a dozen different ways. Liberty, free enquiry, philosophic investigation—these things surely have a close relation with religion. And how can a race have made great contributions to moral philosophy or ethics without having also made contributions to religion? Secondly, Greek thought did not stop short of religion, and not only indirectly, but directly, in its teachings and conceptions of the Ultimate and of man's relation to the Ultimate —directly, that is, in matters of religion—it has left behind it ideas and teachings of greatness and of truth.

But how far, it may still be asked, are the true and helpful or noble things, which, directly or indirectly, Greece contributed to religion in any sense *additions* to the yet greater contributions of Israel? Let us suppose that Greek teachers and thinkers laid down the ruling that the gods demand or desire from men justice and compassion. It is a true and a noble ruling, but it has been laid down with greater emphasis and clarity by Hebrew prophets and lawgivers. What new religious thought or doctrine did the teachers or thinkers of Hellas enunciate which we do not find anticipated or elaborated in Judaea?

Once more the answer is twofold. First, there is an interest, a value, and even a practical helpfulness, in finding certain true and noble thoughts familiar to us from the Bible expressed in another, but not less striking, way by the Greeks. For the thought, as expressed in Greek, fortifies and illumines the same thought as expressed in Hebrew. The two stir the imagination in different ways, and each deepens the impression wrought by the other. Moreover, a fundamental thought, as it appears in Greek, does not cover precisely the same ground as the equivalent thought in its Hebrew form. Thought and form constitute one whole, and therefore the Greek whole and the Hebrew whole cannot be entirely the same. Each deepens and intensifies the other. Secondly, Greek teachers *do* supply thoughts and doctrines which, in part at least, are really original and really new. They may be complementary to Hebrew thoughts and Hebrew doctrines, but they are not entirely the same.

The word "complementary" suggests an important point which may fitly be brought forward here. There must, I take it, be adequate kinship between two sets of religious ideas to enable the one to obtain any profit from the other. If they are *too* different, the first can hardly absorb or adopt anything from the second. It may, for instance, be that Buddhism contains elements or aspects of religious truth which are not contained in Judaism, but it is doubtful whether Judaism could adopt or absorb anything from Buddhism. The two religions are too different. It may be that they could be ultimately linked, as it were, together by a series of intermediaries, but it would be from these intermediaries that the two religions would conceivably draw a little nearer to,

or absorb a little from, each other, and not by any direct and immediate influence. It is not improbable that for a very long sequence of ages each different religion may, in the divine education of the world, retain a certain one-sidedness and a certain over-emphasis of particular doctrines. Let us imagine that in Indian pantheism and in Buddhistic ethics there lies an element of truth. It may be that for a long sequence of ages Jewish monotheism may be unable to adopt or absorb that element. It may be necessary that a certain touch of one-sidedness and over-emphasis may cling to it for very long. But Greek religious thought and Greek religious teaching, in some of their nobler forms and phases, are not, it is contended, too remote and too unlike Jewish thought or teaching for Judaism to be able to absorb and assimilate certain elements of them to its own profit and edification.

It is a commonplace that Christianity conquered the world partly because it underwent a considerable infiltration from Hellenism. It assimilated a certain amount of Greek thought and Greek teaching. It would be a cheap mistake to suppose that this infiltration and assimilation merely tended to paganise, that it merely weakened pure, monotheistic wine with muddy, heathen, polytheistic water. Nor would it be true to suppose that it was all in the direction, or in the sphere, of metaphysical theology, turning, for instance, alleged historical events into ultimate ontological truths. That is not so. It at least included the development of several Hebrew ideas by a Greek setting and presentation, as well as the adoption of several Greek ideas which were scarcely Hebrew at all—and this in the field of religion and morality as well as in the field of theology and metaphysics.

But Christianity could not have undergone this infiltration and assimilation if there had not been a certain kinship, or if there had been too great a distance, between the Greek and the Jew.

And here, perhaps, I may introduce a word or two in defence and explanation of the adjective in my chapter's title. It is clear that I have already made many heretical remarks from the point of view of Orthodox Judaism. For, according to that conception of Judaism, religious perfection was attained when the Law was delivered. "All things are in it"; we have only "to turn it and turn it again." Judaism possesses final and complete truth: there is no need and no possibility of progress and development. The point of view of Liberal Judaism is very different. Christian theologians are wont to speak of Christianity as the absolute religion, and the more unorthodox they are, the more emphatic they often become as to this absolute character of the religion they profess and defend. Liberal Judaism may be content with a less exorbitant claim. It is doubtful whether there is, or can be, such a thing at all as "the absolute religion," the one complete changeless and immutable religion for all time, all places and all peoples. We may believe, and we do believe, that of all creeds Liberal Judaism contains the greatest proportion of truth and the smallest proportion of error, without putting forward for it so gigantic and overwhelming a claim. And in any case, its absoluteness has by no means yet arrived. It has still to grow and to develop. It is still alive, and it still can learn and absorb and expand. It does not reject enquiry and investigation. It is willing to accept some complementary aspects of truth, if and when it can find them. That is why

the relations of Liberal Judaism and Hellenism may be a profitable subject for discussion and study, a subject not merely for antiquarian research, but for life and for practice.

But there is another reason too. Liberal Judaism desires to take its place as a genuine religion of the Western world. Jews are not alien Easterns in America and Europe. Their religion claims to be no exotic, no alien eccentricity. It wants to be at home in Europe and America, and to grow there, as in a soil which is suited to its growth. If that be so, Judaism must think out and determine its relation to Hellenism. Within the limits of truth and of its own self-consistency, Liberal Judaism must hellenise. No religion can live in the Western world which has not settled accounts with Hellenism, and absorbed and adopted something of the Hellenic spirit. For one thing, no religion of the West can be without its philosophy, and philosophy, as the West knows it, is the creation of Hellas. Twice before in its history has Judaism sought to come to terms with, and to assimilate, Greek thought and Greek philosophy. On the first occasion the task was taken over by Christianity, which made use of Jewish pioneers' work for its own purposes. Yet the Wisdom of Solomon and the works of Philo remain as striking, if transitional, monuments of what was then accomplished in the attempt to bring together into a higher unity the products of Hellas and of Judaea.

Then again in the era which was made illustrious by the great name of Maimonides, Greek and Jew once more came together. The influence of this attempt at amalgamation was enormous, and has lasted to the present day. But it is pathetic to find Jewish students in Jewish theological colleges still

toiling at Maimonides and at mediaeval philosophy, as if what was good and adequate for the needs of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries were also good and adequate for the nineteenth and the twentieth! Historically, no doubt, Maimonides has high value and importance, while much that he has said is of permanent suggestiveness. Yet to-day we want something more and something different, though doubtless we want something which will again be inadequate and antiquated before the years which separate us from Maimonides have rolled over the face of the world. The needs of Liberal Judaism in 2630 will be very different from its needs in 1918. That is part of my case. But that does not make our needs to-day any the less real and actual.

There are, so far as one can see, two eternal elements in Western civilisation and Western thought. These two elements are the Hebrew and the Greek. They are perdurable. They take different forms, but they seem likely to remain—vital and effective. Moreover, to the written sources of these elements mankind, as it would seem—Western mankind, at any rate—will constantly revert. They will constantly refresh themselves, morally, spiritually, religiously, at the founts of Hellas and of Jerusalem. They will read and re-read the Prophets, the Psalter and the Gospels, on the one hand, they will read and re-read Homer, Plato, Epictetus, on the other. The great Hebrews and the great Greeks will always be of the centre. They are the two chief roots of our civilisation, and from these roots Western humanity will long, if not ever, continue to draw spiritual nurture and refreshment. And in order that there may be increased power and increased unity in our modern Liberal Judaism, we who are specially nourished by

the one root must also draw nourishment from the other. For us too what we get from Judaea and Greece must form an harmonious and living unity, which shall give renewed vitality and strength to our own religion.

Let me now illustrate the kinship between the two spiritual sources of our civilisation by a brief reference to the Greek love of knowledge, the glorification of wisdom. Now, at first sight, this seems a very un-Hebraic quality, nor would I for a moment contend that as Athens developed it and understood it, so, in anything like the same degree or with anything like the same broad freedom, did Jerusalem. One can contrast—a great scholar has done so—the famous utterance of Aristotle about the unfettered cultivation of the reason with the Hebrew warning, "let not the wise man glory in his wisdom." And yet this contrast is by no means the whole of the story or of the truth.[1]

Judaism is a religion which has exalted wisdom. It is true that its wisdom has been limited in area and specific in kind, but it is no less true, and it means a great deal, that its ideal has been set forth in intellectual terms. The praise of wisdom is extolled in such remarkable strains in Proverbs that some commentators have found in it—probably needlessly—an influence from Greece. Wisdom—human or divine—is regarded as the highest and noblest quality both of the Creator and of the creature. The first petition in the oldest and most honoured of Hebrew prayers is for wisdom and discernment. God is blessed as the gracious giver of knowledge. The Rabbis were not insensible to the claims of knowledge—even of secular knowledge,—and they

[1] Butcher, *Harvard Lectures on Greek Subjects*, p. 110.

conceived God as the God of truth as well as the God of goodness. On seeing a wise man distinguished for his knowledge of the Law, they bid us say, "Blessed art thou, O Lord, who hast imparted of thy wisdom to them that fear thee." But on seeing a wise man distinguished for other than sacred knowledge, it is no less right and ordered to say, "Blessed art thou, O Lord, who hast given of thy wisdom to flesh and blood." All wisdom, whether sacred or profane, finds its source and its unity in the one and only God. To the Hellene the main contrast between the Barbarian and himself was that he, the Hellene, was so much more intelligent than the barbarian. That was pride, if you will, but a not unjustifiable pride. And to the Hebrew, his difference from the Gentile lay also in his possession of wisdom. If he observe the Law, "surely this nation is a wise and understanding people." Idolatry is folly as well as sin.

The introduction of reason into religion, the fusion of righteousness and understanding, are not un-Hebraic or un-Jewish. It has been stated that "the wedding of thought with morality, of wisdom with virtue—so characteristic of Greece—(is) yet of all its phenomena perhaps the strangest to us." But it cannot be said that the ideal of this wedding *sounds* strange, or even *is* strange, to Jewish ears.[1]

But what aid does reason give to religion? What service does it render? It has to cleanse religion from superstition, to free it from that heritage and burden of folly—that *Urdummheit*, as Prof. Gilbert Murray, following a German scholar, calls it,—which for so many centuries, or rather for so many millennia, dogged its footsteps and impeded its development.[2]

[1] Livingstone, *The Greek Genius* (Ed. 2), p. 224 *fin.*
[2] G. Murray, *Four Stages of Greek Religion*, p. 16.

Modify the *conception* of Reason a little, and you get the idea of Rationalism, modify the *word* a little, and you get the idea of Reasonableness. How much rationalism should there be in religion? Well, that is a question of taste. To-day we should all like to exclude from religion astrology and divination and augury: most of us would like also to exclude animal sacrifices and taboos; demons and devils and spirits; spells and exorcisms and incantations; local hells, fiery purgatories, material heavens. The exclusion of all these things has been the work of rationalism. Religion, dropping them, becomes, as we think, the purer and the stronger; superstition wanes. They are all, as history and investigation show us, part and parcel of the *Urdummheit*, or aftergrowths from it.

Now in different degrees and measures, and with alternations of success and failure, both Hellenism and Hebraism have fought against the various forms and manifestations of the *Urdummheit*, and have attempted to purge religion from superstition. There is already much of this purgation in Homer.[1] The casual reader thinks of the relations of Zeus with Hera, of the tricks played upon the Lord of Heaven by his wife and his daughter, of the intrigue of Ares with Aphrodite and of the inextinguishable laughter of the immortal Gods. And truly the purgation of Homer is an inadequate purgation. But a more careful reading, with Prof. Gilbert Murray's help, shows more. It shows, negatively, the complete or comparative disappearance or neglect of a horde of superstitions, connected with the worship of the dead, with taboos of clean and unclean, with human sacrifices, with auguries and divinations (we recall Hector's great saying εἷς οἰωνὸς ἄριστος, ἀμύνεσθαι

[1] But cp. also Leaf, *Homer and History*, p. 310.

περὶ πάτρης), and it shows, positively, the divine desire for, the divine government in the interests of, justice and order and compassion. The higher minds in Greece, the tragedians, the orators, the great historians, and the philosophers, on the whole, continue, imperfectly and with lapses,—such as the maintenance of the state religion, and such as the inherent nature of polytheism, made almost inevitable —the purgation, and combat various manifestations of the *Urdummheit*, while never reaching, in spite of the immense brain power at play, any complete and harmonious result. Here and there, the Greek purgation runs parallel to, and even nobly supplements, the Jewish purgation, which also, for different reasons, never became systematically complete.

The religion of the Prophets, indeed, marks a wonderfully high level of purity ; the purgation is strikingly large. In Amos, Hosea and Isaiah the old superstitions have faded almost entirely away. God and man stand face to face : their relations to each other are moral and rational. Demons and spirits and ghosts have disappeared, taboos of clean and unclean are ignored : sacrifices, and the whole paraphernalia of outward ritual, are deprived of their potency. It is doubtful whether any society could exist, whether any religious organisation could survive, upon the mere teaching of the Prophets. It is perhaps too spiritual, too disdainful of material helps, for average humanity. The Law, as we know, effected a compromise—whether consciously, or unconsciously is a moot question—between the popular and the prophetic religion. In retaining a mass of old ritual observances, it made concessions to the spirit of the *Urdummheit*, and yet partially removed its sting. For the old superstitious ritual became

now the arbitrary decrees (and therefore no longer magical processes) of the all-wise and all-righteous God. Sacrifices continue in multitude; there are sin offerings and guilt offerings; taboos of food; elaborate rules and regulations of clean and unclean; curious purifications and strange "ordeals" (*e.g.* Numbers v. 11-31). So if, in this particular respect, one compares the religion of Israel, and, let us say, the religion of the Stoics—if, roughly and inaccurately, one may for this purpose put all the Stoics together—in the first century of the Christian era, we should find that each would have something to learn from the other. Zeno, the founder, had said noble things against images and temples, of their needlessness and, in a sense, of their absurdity; the strange saying in the last chapter of Isaiah—perhaps written in Zeno's very lifetime—"The heaven is my throne and the earth is my footstool: what manner of house will ye build unto me? and what place shall be my rest?"—can be paralleled by Stoic utterances. But, on the whole, the Stoics, like the compilers of the Law, approved of temples and sacrifices, though Greek, no less than Jewish, teachers emphasise the need for a pure heart and for a right intention, while both magnify the small gifts of the righteous poor, and condemn and despise the costly offerings of the wicked. Here the parallelism is interestingly complete.

But, in regard to one primitive institution, the Jews under the Law rose superior to the mass of the Stoics. For Stoics admitted divinations and auguries. "As a whole," Prof. Murray says sadly, the Stoics yielded and "gave way."[1] The Jews rejected all these superstitions. They maintained the high and

[1] G. Murray, *op. cit.* p. 125.

pure and sane level of the old priestly writer, who in the sublime first chapter of Genesis emphatically implies that the stars are just material *things*. Astrology is as foolish as hepatoscopy. Living birds can no more indicate the future than the entrails of beasts. This rational attitude was well maintained by the Jews throughout. Officially there was no concession here to superstition and folly. The story of Masollam, the archer, is a credit to Judaism. It is doubtful whether it would not have seemed shocking even to so noble a creature as Marcus Aurelius himself. On some military expedition in the days of Alexander or of his successors, a certain diviner points out a bird, and bids the company advance if the bird should fly forward, retreat if it fly back. Then Masollam, without a word, draws his bow, and shoots the bird. To the angry imprecations of the augur and the soldiers, he replies bravely: "How can the bird, who could not foresee to save itself, tell us anything of value about our own expedition? If it had been able to forecast the future, it would never have come to this place, fearing lest it should be shot at and killed by Masollam the Jew." This story is told in Josephus's ugly Greek, but is it not worthy of Greek rationalism at its purest and its best? We may be proud that, in regard to this branch of Folly, Judaism has never wavered or given way.

On the other hand, in the matter of clean and unclean, the Law, most unfortunately, clung to primitive conceptions and superstitions, and by codifying stereotyped and confirmed them. But, in this sphere, the best minds of the Greeks, and some of the greatest of the Stoics, carried the war against superstition further. We have heard in a previous

chapter the liberating utterance of Jesus, "There is nothing from without the man that going into him can defile him." No whit inferior is the saying of Theano, "Do you ask when a woman is clean after intercourse with a man? If he be her husband, at once, if he be another man, never."[1] Thus Hebrew and Greek together can drive away primaeval folly, and put it to flight. There is a true kinship between them.

Reason, I said, leads in the ethical field to reasonableness. And here there is much to learn from the Greeks. Here may be brought in all that "sweetness and light" which to Matthew Arnold seemed so characteristic of Hellenism. And of the higher Greek thought, and of certain nobler manifestations of Greek life, we may truly say that Arnold is right. Their history seems to show a constant struggle to attain this ideal against the temptations and desires of the natural man. Upon the whole, and in the long run, they were unable to succeed. Reasonableness succumbs. *Hubris* gets the better of *Sophrosunê*. Excess and defect win the day over all-roundness, balance, the mean. But, none the less, the ideal was there, expressed for all time in admirable words, and at least in some few admirable deeds.

To the Greek, reason was directly related to limit, to proportion, to order. If it prompted, on the one hand, to liberty, it inspired obedience, upon the other. Reason said, Μηδὲν ἄγαν—everything in moderation, by which reason did not mean that one could have too much wisdom, too much beauty, or too much goodness, but that wisdom, beauty, goodness were in themselves principles or expressions of order, limit, proportion. The most characteristic

[1] Schmidt, *Die Ethik der alten Griechen*, vol. i. p. 133.

Greek virtue, the very name for which is hardly translatable, is *Sophrosunê*, self-control, temperance, moderation, reasonableness, "sweetness and light."

The good man is he who is measured (*metrios*), who observes measure—"*massvoll*"—who is self-restrained. *Kosmios* (orderly) is another frequent synonym for good. Thus, in the *Gorgias*, Plato says that the orderly soul is temperate and good, for he does what is seemly and proper towards both God and man. The intemperate man is "unrestrained in his lusts; the friend neither of God nor of man, for he is incapable of communion, and he who is incapable of communion is incapable of friendship. But communion and friendship and orderliness and temperance bind together heaven and earth and gods and men; wherefore is the universe called *Kosmos* or order." In the *Laws*, Temperance is called a condition of virtue, rather than a virtue itself; in the *Republic*, it is one of the four cardinal virtues; it is the harmony of the soul, and makes a man the "master of himself."

It was in accordance with Greek feeling that Aristotle makes all the virtues and virtue itself to consist in a mean, a balance between two extremes, though he is careful to point out that the theory does not mean that of the virtues themselves there can be any superabundance or excess. "Measure and symmetry," says Plato, "are beauty and virtue all the world over." "Nothing is more in conformity with measure than mind and knowledge," for "in measure and the mean and the suitable and the like, the eternal nature is to be found."

Insolent excess, *Hubris*, the lustful and measureless passion, which respects no laws of gods or men,—that is the root of all evil. However keenly the

Greeks realised the beauty of freedom, they realised too that freedom is itself the product of law. And however much they ventured to think out all problems, to follow the argument whithersoever it led, however much they venerated the mind and the divine reason of man, they were yet very sensitive to human limits and human frailty. "A day can humble all human things, and a day can lift them up"; "lives that have waxed too proud" meet misfortune when they "who are born to man's estate forget it in thoughts too high for man." Insolence, *hubris*, "breeds the tyrant," it makes a man "walk haughtily, with no fear of justice and no reverence for the gods." As the Assyrian to Isaiah, so was Xerxes, the barbarian King, the type of this reckless insolence to the Greek. "The excessive love of self," says Plato, "is in reality the source to each man of all his sins." Close to the Greeks was the relation between reason and reasonableness. It is characteristic that they raised the word for seemliness, propriety, fittingness, to express high forms of righteousness and justice. "*Epieikês*," seemly, decent, fitting, can often be rightly translated by "good." *Epieikeia* can mean gentleness, kindness, fairness, and finally emerges as the philosophic term for what we know as "equity." Of this virtue Aristotle says, in his Rhetoric, "Equity consists in making allowances for human infirmities, in regarding the intention of the legislator rather than his language, the purpose of an act rather than the act itself, the whole rather than the part, in considering not so much what is a person's character at a particular moment as what it has usually been, in remembering benefits rather than injuries, and benefits received rather than benefits conferred, in suffering injustice patiently, in wishing

to resort to arbitration rather than to law." From these conceptions and ideals we can find help and suggestion even at the present day.

I might note, here and now, how in divers externals Liberal Judaism has exalted the ideals of reasonableness and beauty, and attempted to give expression and do justice to them. It has sought to put into the worship of the Synagogue order and proportion and limit; to introduce seemliness and self-restraint; to make the services reverent and beautiful, in other words to unite Hellenism to Hebraism. It is a curious fact that, in the long classic period of Biblical literature, form is by no means neglected. Limit, proportion, restraint are observed. Then in the silver age form grows less elegant, till at last in the Talmudic period—when Hellenism has been cast out and contemned—formlessness and intemperance rule supreme: the language tends to become poor, rambling, discursive; laws are heaped on laws without moderation or limit, and the religious ideal becomes one of number and excess and multiplication, whether in words or in ordinances, rather than of balance and order and reasonableness and gracious wisdom and seemly restraint.

Then, in modern times, reform enters upon the stage, and old ideals, Greek, but not wholly unknown to the best spirits of the Biblical age, are recalled. The public worship is made orderly, restrained, seemly, beautiful: the multiplication of ordinances is checked: with fewer laws to obey, the principle of Law shines out the more brightly.

But now let us go again more deeply below the surface. In what ways did Greek reasonableness, restraint and moderation show themselves in the sphere of religion? More especially let us look

round for thoughts which are valuable for us as complementary to the religious development and religious teaching of the Hebrews. Greek *Sophrosunê* struggled to assert itself against an underlying tendency to insolence, to excess, to *Hubris*. Judaism, in spite of a certain original tendency in the Jews to fierceness, to violence, and to cruelty, made pity and compassion essential features of its ethical ideal. To the Jew, God became not only just and awful, but also righteous and compassionate. Nevertheless, a certain residuum of the old, fierce, violent, unmoralised Yahweh remained, and this residuum was made occasionally to show itself to the enemy of Israel, to the idolater, to the unrepentant sinner. To them God is made to display unreasonable, vindictive anger; them He will punish retributively, not disciplinarily; in other words, so far as they are concerned, He is not wholly good.

Two things happened in Greece. The fine development of moral philosophy and ethical teaching reacted upon the conception of the divine nature and of its dealings with man. (Whereas in Judaea it was a case of religious development helping morality, rather than of morality helping religion.) Secondly, Zeus is much less purely and nationally Greek than Yahweh is Israelite. Or, rather, he is, on the one hand, identified with the head-God of many other nations; and, on the other hand, he fades into the impersonal, nameless and many-named divine nature, the supreme Deity who is one and many at one and the same time, who is the soul and the law and the reason of all the universe, immanent in it, if also transcendent above it. Thus the Greek teachers knew little of that difficulty—so grievous to the Hebrew—of making their supreme God impartially just to the

foreigner as well as to the Greek. That particular stumbling-block in the way of a complete moralisation of the idea of God hardly lay in their path, or, at all events, was of no particular strength and size. Anger, said a Greek philosopher, does not belong to the divine nature, which in its singleness would not admit the impurity and divisiveness of passion and of wrath. God is said to make allowances. Famous are Plato's two canons of theology. God is wholly true, and God is wholly good.

Thus human fierceness cannot excuse itself by, or base itself upon, a pattern in heaven. To rejoice over the fallen foe may be an offence against religion. Homer already bears witness to the conquests of Greek *Sophrosunê* in this direction. When the nurse Eurycleia sees the dead bodies of the suitors and "the great gore of blood," she begins to cry aloud for joy. But Odysseus checked and held her in her eagerness, and said, "Within thine own heart rejoice, old nurse, and be still, and cry not aloud; for it is an unholy thing to boast over slain men."

It may be said that in the adage of Proverbs, "Rejoice not when thine enemy falleth," we have the same teaching, and thus the Greek can add nothing to the Hebrew. But my point is that the two are complementary, and that just because they are complementary, they can be helpful to each other. Even though we have in the Bible that fine verse in Proverbs, and some similar verses elsewhere, the same sort of teaching, presented in another form, may be stimulating and valuable. In this very matter of sinners and enemies, and of human frailty and weakness, it cannot be said that Jewish (or Christian) doctrine is always consistent, always adequate, always on one and the same high and generous level,—

whether we turn to the Old Testament, to the New Testament, or to the Rabbinical literature. Nor, by any means, is the literature of Greece. But no one who recognises that here, as elsewhere, in ethical problems, there are many aspects of the question, and that truth has many facets, can fail to be impressed and aided by the teaching of the Stoics. And all this teaching, even though much of it proceed directly from Roman and not from Greek lips,—Seneca, Musonius, Marcus Aurelius,—is yet justly to be regarded as one of the voices of Hellenism.

So long as consistency is preserved, and the power of action is not weakened, we cannot have too many right motives and ends for our moral and religious action. And even perfect consistency must, or need, not be valued at too high a price. Is it necessary, is it possible, for all of us to have an absolutely harmonious theory, worked out consistently in all its parts, of our relation to God and to our fellow-men and of the divine relation to the world? I think not. We may be rightly stirred to different bits of well-doing now by Epictetus and now by Hosea, even though Epictetus's view of the world could not be harmonised altogether with the view of Hosea.

The noblest Stoic teaching about enemies and anger may partly be due to defects as well as to merits. On the defect side it may be partly due to an inadequate realisation of the hideousness of sin, to a too purely intellectual or determinist conception of moral wrong-doing. It may also be partly due to the ideal of allowing nothing to disturb the inward peace and calm of the sage. You refrain from anger with the man who wrongs you, not for his sake, but for your own. But this very determination towards

inward peace and calm, the self-conquest and unruffledness of the soul, is itself an ideal neither false nor ignoble, is itself a facet of moral excellence, if not the whole of it. It may be itself of complementary value to the more emotional ideals of the Jew.

This teaching is, however, also due to the universalism of the Stoics, to their cosmopolitanism, and to the fact that they regard the divine being as having no special relation to any particular race. Of this there will be a word to say later on. Meanwhile from these causes, be they even partly weaknesses, how noble is the result. I will not attempt quotations. But it comes to this. Mankind is one large family, and in all men there is a spark of the divine fire. Quench not that spark through passion, hatred, anger, or the desire of revenge. Though all men (in Biblical language) are created in the divine image, they are yet very frail and very liable to err. Bear with their weaknesses: overlook their faults: aid them, relieve them, strengthen them. If a man has done you wrong, help him and do good to him none the less: show and feel no anger. Conquer evil with good. Overcome hatred by gentleness, injustice by benevolence. The Stoic looked out upon the human tragi-comedy with eyes which never flashed with wrath, but were more often, I think (though this was to them a weakness), wet with tears. His outlook is gentle, calm, resigned. Yet he never ceases to labour for the good of this frail humanity: he does his duty to the fullest, even though, as we may have to notice hereafter, he is not stirred to action by the hope of a glorious future. It is noble teaching: and in actual practice we know that it moved many, from an emperor to a slave, to live

strenuous and faithful lives, and to die difficult and cruel deaths with courage and calm. It is complementary teaching to the best doctrine of the Bible. It connects. That is why it is useful for the Jew to learn the teaching of the Greeks: he can always find connections for it in his own writings. "Fret not thyself because of evil-doers: rest in the Lord; cease from anger." Here is a Jewish connection, to which the calming and strengthening words of Seneca, of Epictetus, and of Aurelius, can easily be fitted on. And, on the other hand, it would be foolish to ignore that there are many things in the Bible, relative to both God and man, which are of a very different spirit from the words of the Psalm that I have just quoted, things to which the Stoic teaching supplies a needed corrective and a delightful antidote.

Let us now turn to another aspect of kinship between Greece and Judaea, another piece of doctrine in which the one may be looked upon as complementary to the other. The attitude of Judaism to earth and the things of earth has often been criticised and misunderstood. That attitude has varied in different ages; it was profoundly influenced by the introduction of the new doctrine of the Resurrection and of a Blessed Life after death, so that it was never quite the same after that doctrine had become prevalent as it had been before its coming. It is well known how, upon the one hand, it has been said that prosperity is the blessing of the Old Testament, and on the other hand, how a despair of earth, a pessimistic attitude towards human nature and human life, are often regarded as specifically Hebrew, as unfortunate Jewish remainders and excrescences within the bosom of Christianity. Both these judgments are largely erroneous or one-sided. Of

Rabbinic Judaism it would, upon the whole, be true to say that, while not denying that the next life would be better than this life, it taught men to find happiness also in this life by its sanctification and spiritualisation. The simple joys of earth are recognised and approved. Again, Judaism is not without its element of mysticism. But, on the whole, its thought is turned to action and study, rather than to mystic yearnings and emotions. Its God, on the whole, is markedly transcendent, and though he may be created in the divine image, man is emphatically other than God. Whether in this life or in the next, man retains for ever his separateness and his inferiority.

Now apart from the doctrine of the future life, there is a good deal of agreement here between the Jewish view and the Greek view—the predominant Greek view, that is, of the Classical age. The Greek too believed in "the spiritualisation of the earthy": and he too separated God from man and man from God.[1] The views which Mr. Livingstone tells us were held by the best of the Greeks about human life and its joys are by no means so unlike Jewish views as he seems to imagine. The two conceptions are at any rate complementary, as Mr. Livingstone himself, in one passage of his delightful book, has been at pains to point out.[2]

But, on the other hand, when Mr. Livingstone comes to "some exceptions" and to Plato, he is again wrong in supposing that Judaism—taken as a whole—despairs of the body, and despairs of earth,

[1] Murray, *op. cit.* p. 133: "One of the greatest works of the Hellenic spirit, and especially of fifth-century Athens, was to insist on what seems to us such a commonplace truism, the difference between man and God." Here Athens and Jerusalem shake hands.

[2] Livingstone, *op. cit.* pp. 127, 138.

or that it teaches that there is an incurably evil element in man, or that it proclaims the doctrine of Original Sin. Plato, in fact, is much less Hebraic than Mr. Livingstone seems to imagine, and precisely because of his falsely supposed "Hebraic" elements —*e.g.* the body a burden or a tomb—is he a valuable corrective and a needed complement to the main stream and line of Jewish doctrine, though here, too, there are some Jewish thoughts to which his teaching —with its own peculiar facet of truth—can be linked, and by which it can be assimilated.[1]

The Jewish spiritualisation of the earthy is, however, conducted upon different lines from the Greek spiritualisation, and depends upon different methods and ideals. Hence it is that the Greek spiritualisation can give to the Jew—at least to the freer and more receptive mind of the Liberal Jew—an extra string to his bow. The Jewish spiritualisation proceeds by earthly actions and events being looked at from the point of view of the divine glory. Judaism covered "natural" life with a network of religious commands and associations, and thus transfigured and spiritualised it. Or, again, if earthly joys are for the righteous (when they get them, which, it must be admitted, is not very often) a divine reward for well-doing, these rewards must be used in pious and seemly gratitude, and to the "sanctification of the Name." For both reasons the gifts of earth must be enjoyed as befits those who worship and adore their Giver. The Greek spiritualisation is different, but it may also be used by those who continue to adopt primarily the Hebrew method. For the one is not antagonistic to the other, but complementary. The Greek transfigures the earthy

[1] Livingstone, *op. cit.* pp. 190, 193, 195.

by exalting, and then following, the inward spiritual law of man's being. As a rational being he must act as reason tells him: and reason tells him—tells, that is, the best and most representative of his race—to act justly, temperately and sanely. Reason is allied with an all-round and many-sided development of his body and his mind. Reason bids him rejoice in youth and strength and wisdom and beauty, to find pleasure even in food and drink, and the pleasures of sense, but the pleasure must be the pleasure, not of an animal, but of a man, a creature endowed with reason and by reason self-controlled. The Greek innate and peculiar sense of fitness, of proportion, of temperance, together with their high intellectual and artistic endowments, which led them bravely to exalt the pleasures of the mind above the pleasures of the body, led them also, as regards outward and material instruments of pleasure and prosperity, to be the votaries of simplicity, good taste, refinement, moderation. Perhaps the Jews of the West have not yet quite shed and discarded a certain Oriental weakness for luxury, expense and excess. "Judaism," says Professor Butcher, a critic keen but most appreciative, has been "too much inclined to hanker after material delights."[1] For us, then, the prize that was a wreath of wild olive, and the famous words of Pericles, *φιλοκαλοῦμεν μετ' εὐτελείας καὶ φιλοσοφοῦμεν ἄνευ μαλακίας* ("We are lovers of the beautiful, yet simple in our tastes, we cultivate the mind without loss of manliness"), may have still a special lesson and a meaning.

When we reach philosophy, and when we reach Stoicism more especially, this inward spiritualisation, by virtue of the dignity and rationality of the human

[1] Butcher, *Harvard Lectures*, p. 67.

mind, becomes more conscious and more defined : it takes on, moreover, a distinctly religious hue. The doctrine of the divine image, man's kinship in respect of his reason with the divine Soul and Spirit of the universe, is pressed and utilised to the full. To be as human as you can is to be as divine as you can. Sin is a self-degradation—a profanation, not as the Hebrews would say, of the God without, but of the divine spirit that is within. And even benevolence and active help and redemptive succour towards the sinner and the outcast can be (and were) regarded as done, not so much from love of the individual, but out of respect for the divine spirit within the criminal, which, though clouded and sullied, could never be entirely destroyed, done, that is, as in the well-known story of the philosopher and the pirate, not so much for the man's sake, as for humanity's sake, which he disgraced and yet represented.[1]

Ideas and thoughts such as these justly move us, and they can surely be added on to our own moral and religious store. The extra motives will but add to our strength. Again, may we not find complementary teachings of great beauty, cogency and attractiveness in certain Greek doctrines regarding punishment? The passionate craving for the outward and visible manifestation of the divine justice led the Hebrews, as we know, to place an inordinate value upon retribution—upon proportionate punishment and proportionate reward. Nevertheless, there are Jewish connections for the complementary Greek doctrine—that virtue and sin are *in themselves* reward and punishment. We recall the famous and familiar Rabbinic utterance, "The requital of a command is a command, and the requital of a transgression is a

[1] Cp. Adam, *The Vitality of Platonism and Other Essays*, p. 145.

transgression." On the same lines, but going further, are the noble paradoxes of Plato in the *Gorgias*. It is worse to inflict injustice than to suffer it. If one has sinned, it is worse to escape punishment than to receive it. For if the worst thing that can happen to a man is the obscuration and corruption of his own nature and of the divine light within, then clearly to undergo pain and want and sorrow must be less bad than unjustly to cause these things in others. The sufferer can keep his soul pure and unsullied. And if external punishment is remedial, it is clearly a grave loss to be deprived of it. The bad punishment of sin is sin itself, which pollutes the soul and corrupts it.

"The unjust man," says Plato, "is miserable in any case, more miserable, however, if he be not punished and does not meet with retribution, less miserable if he be punished and meet with retribution at the hands of gods and men." Or again: "To be boxed upon the ears wrongfully is not the worst evil which can befall a man; nor to have my purse or my body cut open; but injustice is the greatest of evils to the doer of it." And again: "Can a man be profited by injustice or any other baseness, even though he acquires money and power by his wickedness? What shall he profit if his injustice be undetected and unpunished? He who is undetected only gets worse, whereas he who is detected and punished has the brutal part of his nature silenced and humanised" (note here that punishment is not retributory but educational), "the gentler element in him is liberated, and his whole soul is perfected and ennobled by the acquirement of justice and temperance and wisdom." "The greatest penalty of evil-doing," says Plato elsewhere, "is to grow

into the likeness of bad men." "To have sight and hearing and the use of the senses, or to live at all without justice and virtue, even though a man be rich in all the so-called goods of fortune, would be the greatest of evils, if life were immortal; not so great, if the bad man lives only a very short time."

Two things are implied in these striking utterances. The first is that the problem of evil is, in the last resort, a problem of moral evil far more than a problem of outward weal and outward woe. The second is that the only real reward of virtue is virtue, the only real punishment of sin is sin. That too is a Jewish saying, but it needs strengthening and emphasis. That strengthening and emphasis are given by Hellenism.

Again, in the last resort, that is no true prayer which prays for the mere destruction of the wicked. It is no true prayer, because what one should pray for, if one seeks to imitate God, is not the destruction, but the purification, of the wicked. But if one *is* viciously inclined and revengeful, then, unlike the Psalmist, one should not pray for the overthrow of the wicked, but rather that he should continue in prosperity, and sink deeper and deeper into the mire of pollution and of sin!

The sharp and clean-cut distinction between the goods of sense and the goods of spirit, between the outward and the inward, is Greek rather than Hebrew. Greek is the saying, "Despise all those things which you will not need when you are released from the body, but those things that you will then need, discipline yourself to attain, and invoke the gods to help you." Yet this Greek distinction merely takes up and enlarges the familiar saying of Proverbs, "Wisdom is better than rubies," or puts

in a philosophical garb the conviction of the Rabbis that the study of the Law is superior to all material possessions.

The Stoic expected no outward reward from God whether in this life or in another. His pantheistic or semi-pantheistic conception of the divine did not admit of any such idea. But his great comfort and his spur to high endeavour lay in the thought that he could put himself, by virtue and wisdom and by the exercise of reason, into line with God, with the order of the world, with the will of nature, with the right movement of the universe. We must, I think, translate these ideas into modern equivalents in order to feel something of their force. Jowett has said: "To feel habitually that he is part of the order of the universe is one of the highest ethical motives of which man is capable." If, in more Theistic phraseology, we believe that righteousness and love are at the heart of the universe, then a man, so far as he deliberately lives the life of righteousness and love, may feel that he is in tune with the universe, working with, and not against, the highest, unseen spiritual forces of the world—a partner with God. No complaint must be made against the divine will: the good of the all, of which you are a tiny fragment, may need your pain. The great Kosmos marches to its predestined goal: yet each man has his part in it: each has his duty. For the sake of the whole the individual may have to be sacrificed or to sacrifice himself. He is not condemned by a divine judge: he is not rewarded by a divine paymaster. He is, in a sense, his own judge and his own paymaster, but, at the same time, he can, as it were, feel either that he is working in harmony with the divine will and purpose of the world, or that he is, however

idly and vainly, working against it. Here, if he sees aright, is his true reward and here is his veritable punishment. Marcus Aurelius offers many examples of these conceptions. "We are all working together," he muses, "to one end, some with knowledge and design; others without knowing what they do." "All rational beings have been formed for co-operation. Thou art a limb of the system of rational beings." "Accept everything which happens, even if it is disagreeable, because it leads to the health and felicity of the whole. For God would not bring upon any man what He has brought if it were not useful for the whole." "Nothing happens to any man which he is not formed by Nature to bear." "Everything harmonises with me which is harmonious with thee, O Universe. Everything is fruit to me which thy seasons bring, O Nature: from thee are all things, in thee are all things, to thee all things return. The poet says, Dear city of Cecrops, and wilt thou not say, Dear City of God?" Epictetus says: "If you consider yourself a part of a whole, it is for the sake of that whole that at one time you should be ill, at another be in want, or sometimes die prematurely. Why then are you troubled? As a foot is no longer a foot, if it is detached from the body, so you are no longer a man, if you are separated from other men. Must one, then, have a fever, another die, and another be condemned? Yes, for it is impossible in such a body, in such a whole, among so many living together, that such things should not happen, some to one and others to others."

"Rest in the Lord," said the Psalmist. "Fret not thyself because of evil-doers." Possess thy soul in patience. Such was Stoic teaching too, though man's sufficiency in himself is emphasised rather than

his freedom through his dependence upon God. Yet it often comes to the same thing, for Stoic independence denoted submission to the divine will. The one thing of which you are master is the one thing which is the source and seat of good and evil, of happiness and misery. That one thing is your soul, your reason, your higher and truer self, which can either rule and govern the passions or become their slave. Free and purify and make wise the soul, raise it above all outward events which it cannot alter and which are powerless to alter it, and you have reached the secret of happiness. Whatever befall you, you, in your inward fortress, are safe. You are calm: you are independent. Hear Aurelius once more:

"The mind which is free from passions is a citadel, for man has nothing more secure to which he can fly for refuge and for the future be impregnable." "Suppose that men curse thee, cut thee in pieces, kill thee. What can these things do to prevent thy mind from remaining pure, wise, sober, just?" "Retire into thyself. The rational principle which rules has this nature that it is content with itself when it does what is just, and so secures tranquillity." "Look within: within is the fountain of good, and it will ever bubble up, if thou wilt ever dig." "What more do I seek, if what I am now doing is the work of an intelligent and social being, and one who is under the same law with God?" "Be like the promontory against which the waves continually break, but it stands firm and tames the fury of the water around it! Say not, Unhappy am I because this has happened to me, for not *this* is a misfortune, but to bear it nobly is good fortune."

Superb as are the religious faith and outpourings of the Psalmists, we are sometimes conscious of

a certain one-sidedness. It is true that the complaints against misfortune, the desire for recompense, whether for their own fidelity or their opponents' sins, are at bottom, not so much the wish for personal happiness, as the justified yearning for the Kingdom of God and for the triumph of His cause. Nevertheless, these complaints and desires seem sometimes excessive. We feel that there is another way, not so much of bearing trouble, but of looking at it. The individual, we say, must think more of the whole and less of himself. In so far as the "I" of the Psalter is a collective "I"—the community speaking, and not the writer in his own person—the objection does not apply. But each *individual*, we feel sometimes, must make less fuss about his own deserts, his own wrongs, his own misfortunes. There is a certain smallness—so in some moods it seems to us—in the craving for recognition, for happiness, for reward. It is, says Gruppe, the self-righteous egoist who moans that the book-keeping of the universe is in disorder, because *his* merits are not properly entered in and marked down.[1]

When this mood is upon us, we may find satisfaction in the thoughts of the Greeks. It cannot be said that, at any period from Homer onwards, they had not an acute sense of the sadness of human life, and of the misfortunes and sorrows and sufferings to which all mortal men are prone. Yet, even before the Stoics, they faced earthly life—after which, as the Psalmists, they knew and recognised, for the most part, no second and longer life of conscious blessedness and joy—with steadiness and courage. They enjoyed what fortune gave them, and manfully endured its blows. And because death was the end,

[1] Gruppe, *Griechische Mythologie und Religionsgeschichte*, p. 1030.

therefore the noblest of them were eager to do their best while the light of day shone on them, and then to leave a good reputation behind them when they had passed away. The faithful service of the state, or the attainment of renown, is enough reward. Very significant, and not without their nobility and pathos, are those words of the Homeric hero which are quoted by Professor Butcher as very typically Greek. "Ah, friend, if once escaped from this battle we were for ever to be ageless and immortal, neither would I fight myself in the foremost ranks, nor would I send thee into the war that giveth men renown, but now —for assuredly ten thousand fates of death do every way beset us, and these no mortal man may escape nor avoid—now let us go forward, whether we shall give glory to other men, or others to us."[1] And next to these words, which come from the opening of the Classical period, we may fitly place the words of Demosthenes from its close. "Seeing that a fixed term for all men is death, good men must attempt noble deeds, holding hope before them as their shield, and bearing what God sends them with resignation and with courage."[2]

To these considerations the Stoic doctrine added two grounds of consolation in trouble, which, hard as they are for human nature to grasp, yet have a nobility of their own. The first we have already noticed. It is the unimportance in relation to the whole of the individual's outward fortunes or sufferings. Endure; act nobly; think of the whole of which you are only a tiny fragment. Your pain may be necessary in, or for, the harmony of the universe. Make no complaint against God. The

[1] *Iliad*, xii. 322-328; Butcher, *Some Aspects of the Greek Genius*, p. 176.
[2] Schmidt, *Die Ethik der alten Griechen*, vol. ii. p. 76; *De Corona*, § 76.

second is even harder. Outward and bodily things and sensations are not truly good or truly evil. The only true good is inward : virtue and the mind. The only true evil is sin and the mind's corruption. It is strange that the Greeks, with all their sunny realism, and with all their artistic appreciation of material things, were yet able to rise—and in their greatest writers without posing or affectation or untruth—to the height of this hard idealism. "I am the master of my fate, I am the captain of my soul." The best Stoics could certainly say that, and they proved it in their lives. No one can read Epictetus and Aurelius, and the stories of the Stoic deaths in Tacitus, without being moved to admiration. But not only this. It is not suggested that the teaching is adequate, but it is suggested that it is complementary. Stoic fortitude, Stoic endurance and calm, Stoic contempt for pain and hardship, have a meaning and a value. They can be utilised and partially imitated. They can be united to a more thoroughly Theistic faith. "How is it possible," says Epictetus, "that a man who has nothing, who is naked, houseless, without a hearth, squalid, without a slave, without a city, can pass a life that flows easily? See, God has sent you a man to show you that it is possible. Look at me, who am without possessions, without a slave ; I sleep on the ground ; I have no wife, no children, but only the earth and heavens, and one poor cloak. And what do I want? Am I not without sorrow? Am I not without fear? Am I not free? When did any of you see me failing in the object of my desire? or ever falling into that which I would avoid? did I ever blame God or man?"[1]

But noble as the words are—nor in their simplicity

[1] *Discourses of Epictetus*, iii. 22.

(for we must not forget that Arrian, not Epictetus, is the writer) can they properly be accused of self-righteousness and conceit—they are yet clearly words which were unable to conquer the world. If we hold that the theory of the Eternal Father who cares is true, then for the nameless many, for the humble in heart and the ordinary in mind, it is this theory of the loving Father who knows, and hearkens to, the cry of His children, that best can help and strengthen and console. The Psalmists, in spite of all their complaints and all their yearnings for retribution and reward, have helped, and will help, more millions of men to noble endurance and dauntless faith and lofty deeds than all the teachings of the Stoics. Nevertheless, why should we not add to our quiver an arrow from the Stoic armoury? It is a fine and fair arrow, if not the finest and the fairest.

The Greeks no more than the Jews were able to solve the eternal problem of evil. In a famous passage in the *Theaetetus*, Plato combines a sense of the hopelessness of the problem with an ethical lesson. "Evils," says Socrates, "can never pass away, for there must always remain something which is antagonistic to good. Having no place among the gods in heaven, of necessity they hover around the mortal nature, and this earthly sphere. Wherefore we ought to fly away from earth to heaven as quickly as we can: and to fly away is to become like God, as far as this is possible, and to become like Him is to become holy and just and wise." Here the theory is hinted at that the divine goodness is limited in its power. We have already noticed the Stoic view that what we call evil is needful and even good in the economy of the whole, so that not only physical evils, but the moral evil of wicked men ultimately

—and unknown to themselves—fulfil their part in the evolution of the universe. Hence as nothing—whether what we call good or what we call bad—fails in its intention, there is no such thing as evil to the mind of God. Such is the meaning of the famous saying of Epictetus: "As a mark is not set up for the purpose of missing its aim, so neither does the nature of evil exist in the world." With this we may compare the noble and famous hymn of Cleanthes, the Stoic, concerning which Mr. Adam has written so interestingly, in his short but illuminating book, *The Vitality of Platonism*:

> "O God most glorious, called by many a name,
> Nature's great King, who rulest all by law,
> We are thy children, we alone, of all
> On earth's broad ways that wander to and fro,
> We bear thine image. Nought is done without
> Thy will, O Lord, on earth, or sea, or sky,
> Save what the wicked do by their own folly.

"But thou knowest also how to make odd even, and bring order out of chaos; and the unloved is loved by thee. For thou hast joined together in one whole all things good with all things evil, in such a way that all make up one universal reason, existent evermore."

"For God," as Heraclitus says, "accomplishes all things with a view to the harmony of the whole."

The Stoic palliative against evil is mainly the denial of evil—the denial, that is, of all evil except moral evil, for which man himself is responsible, and from which of his own efforts and discipline he can set himself free. It was possible to weld on to this doctrine a more personal conception of God as the Trainer and Physician of man, so that the outward sorrows of life become disciplinary and remedial.

In this way a bridge is built between Stoic teaching and the teaching of the Old Testament and the Rabbis. "Happy is the man whom God chastens." Sufferings are the chastisements of the divine love.

Thus Seneca says, "God does not pet the good man: He tries him, hardens him, and fits him for Himself." "God bears a fatherly mind towards good men, and loves them in a manly spirit. Let them, He says, be exercised by labours, sufferings and losses, that so they may gather true strength." "Why does God afflict the best of men with ill-health, or sorrow or other troubles? Because in the army the most hazardous services are assigned to the bravest soldiers." "The good man," says Epictetus, "is convinced that whatever he suffers, it is God who is exercising him. Thus he looks up to God and says: Deal with me as Thou wilt: I am of the same mind as Thou art, I am thine."

To these views can be added the Platonic doctrine of personal immortality—the immortality of the soul. Here, again, when we read Plato, we find the Greek supplements the Hebrew. It may not be easy to say precisely what the extra Greek note is, or wherein its excellence consists, but that does not mean that this extra note is, after all, not really there. Listen to this. "Be of good cheer about death, and know of a certainty that no evil can happen to a good man either in life or after death." "Let a man be of good cheer about his soul, who having cast away the pleasures and ornaments of the body as alien to him and working harm rather than good, has sought after the pleasures of knowledge; and has arrayed the soul, not in some foreign attire, but in her own proper jewels, temperance and justice and courage and nobility and truth—in these adorned she is ready

to go on her journey, when her hour comes." Are these words not fitted and worthy to be placed beside those other words, which are, perhaps, so peculiarly moving and beautiful because they are the product of a Jew who not only wrote in Greek, but had been touched by Greek teaching? "The souls of the righteous are in the hand of God, and no torment shall touch them. In the eyes of the foolish they seem to have died, and their departure is accounted to be their hurt, and their journeying away from us to be their ruin; but they are in peace. For even if in the sight of men they be punished, their hope is full of immortality. Having borne a little chastening, they shall receive great good, because God has made trial of them, and found them worthy of Himself."[1]

What, then, may we say that Liberal Judaism can learn from Hellenism? What are the moral and religious elements which, in our own moral and religious equipment, can be strengthened by a study of the best Hellenic thought? And when I say "best," I mean only "best" from our particular point of view, for while, for instance, Aristotle is a greater genius and a greater philosopher than Epictetus, it may well be that religiously we can learn more from Epictetus than from Aristotle.

As in things political, and in the doctrine of the state, men have learned from Greece the value of ordered freedom, of the liberty of obedience, so in morality and religion we can, I think, learn from Greece the nobility and worth of a certain reverent independence, a certain self-sufficiency, a certain conquest of circumstance. Man wills the divine will, and all that befalls him—so far as it is not his

[1] *Wisdom of Solomon*, iii. 1-5.

own fault or alterable by his own action—he regards as the will of God. If he can do that, he is "independent in face of the storms of fortune," and desire and fear are extinguished. Reasoned courage in the hour of danger when the call of duty, or the command of the state, or the will of God, summon you to peril and to death—the courage of Leonidas at Thermopylae—is peculiarly Greek. The Hebrew order seems to be, God enjoins and man obeys: the Greek order seems to be, Man freely puts himself into harmony with God. Both are true and both inspiring; in some moods we may like to use the first order, in some moods the second. The Hebrew bidding to righteousness comes from without: the Greek bidding comes from within. Neither Hebrew nor Greek condemns the world and the things of sense: both are sane and sober realists, but both are idealists as well. Both ask for an enjoyment of the things of sense which is other than the enjoyment of the animal. Personal sanctification and the glory of God—that is how the Hebrew uses the world and triumphs over it: self-control, temperance, the cultivation of the mind, inward refinement and good taste, these are the ideas and ideals that we have won from Hellas. Why should we be righteous, why should we be holy? Because God has ordered us to be so, says the Hebrew. Because it befits our divine manhood, says the Greek. Self-respect, self-reverence, true shame,—these are Greek ideals and Greek conceptions. The untranslatable Greek word *aidôs* (*αἰδώς*), with the kindred but distinct word *aischunê* (*αἰσχύνη*), reveals an entire province of Greek morality. The fear of being thought ill of by others, the desire for honour and reputation, were deepened and refined into a fear of being thought

ill of by oneself, or into a reverence for one's own humanity, or, again, into a reverence for the rational, that is, for the divine, element in one's own nature. So, too, the fear of giving others pain—and especially those whom we respect or pity—the delicate desire to respect their feelings and their rights, became moral motives of extraordinary power.[1]

The two words *aidôs* and *aischunê* were often used in connection with, and sometimes faded into, each other. But more usually their meaning is kept distinct. *Aischunê* means a fear of being blamed by others, and this fear deepens into a sense of honour, a sense of shame. *Aidôs* means a fear of hurting the feelings of others; a respect of, or consideration for, others. It may, therefore, come to mean pity or reverence. It can be felt not only for human beings, but also for the gods. And it can be felt for the impersonal laws of morality, "those unwritten and unfailing statutes of heaven, whose life is not of to-day or yesterday, but from all time, and no man knows when they were first put forth"; "those laws of range sublime, whose father is Olympus alone; their parent was no race of mortal men, no, nor shall oblivion ever lay them to sleep; a mighty god is in them, and he grows not old."[2] Thus in Homer *aidôs* prevents Penelope from violating her fidelity to her absent lord, the lack of it causes a man to show no respect to the laws of duty to the guest, while the sense of it hinders Telemachus from showing disregard to his mother. As modesty and a becoming consideration for the old, *aidôs* is supposed to be the peculiar virtue of the young. Demetrius of Phaleron said the young should in-doors show *aidôs* to their

[1] Cp. Schmidt, *Die Ethik der alten Griechen*, vol. i. pp. 168-184.
[2] Sophocles, *Antigone*, 454; *Œdipus Tyrannus*, 865.

parents, out-of-doors to every passer-by, and in solitude to themselves. So Theophrastus said: "Show *aidôs* to yourself, and you will not need to feel *aischunê* before others"—in other words: self-respect will keep you from sin, and thus from fearing the blame of others.

Thucydides uses *aischunê* in a noble sense when, in describing the plague at Athens, he says that some went to see their friends without thought of themselves and were *ashamed* to leave them. Or, again, where he says that if one party to a quarrel, having got the best of it, overcomes his resentment and offers moderate terms, the other party, from *aischunê*, —a sense of shame or honour—is more likely to keep his word. Brasidas declares readiness, obedience and *aischunê* to be the virtues of a soldier. Through *aischunê* kinsmen must help kinsmen in the hour of need. In an elaborately-worked-out passage, the Spartans are declared to be good warriors because of their orderliness and discipline, for in orderliness and discipline are comprised self-control (*sophrosunê*) which produces *aidôs*, and *aischunê* which produces courage. Here by *aiaôs* is meant reverence towards the general and his orders; by *aischunê* the sense of honour, which gives courage.

Plato, in the *Laws*, tends to identify the two qualities. What he says of them is, I think, singularly helpful, when looked at as supplementary to Hebrew morality. *Aischunê* he defines as the fear of doing wrong. This right fear he declares the legislator to hold in greatest honour; he calls it *aidôs*, reverence. The opposite is insolence or shamelessness. Elsewhere he speaks of that just and noble fear, which will take up arms at the approach of insolence, that divine fear, which we have called *aidôs*

and *aischunê*, reverence and shame. Of this reverence the good man is a willing servant, the coward is independent and fearless. "Let parents," he says, "bequeath to their children not a heap of riches, but *aidôs*, reverence. We, indeed," he adds, "fancy that they will inherit *aidôs* from us, if we rebuke them when they show shamelessness. But in truth the right way is for the elders to feel shame towards the younger, and above all to take heed that no young man sees or hears one of themselves doing or saying anything disgraceful; for where old men have no shame, *aischunê*, these young men will most certainly be devoid of reverence (*aidôs*)."

It is thus an inward sense of what is right and fitting that is to keep a man straight and to restrain him from wrongdoing—not the fear of punishment. Nor can it be said that it was the hope of reward which was to drive a man on to noble deeds. The Greeks possessed an acute sense of the sadness of life and of its sufferings, yet they faced it with courage. They enjoyed what fortune gave them and manfully endured its blows. Death was the end; to them, as to the Psalmists, the life of Hades was a life in no wise worth having; yet all the more were they keen to do their best while the light of day shone upon them, and to leave a good reputation behind. The faithful service of the State, the attainment of renown —these are enough reward. No prose translation can render back the dignified simplicity of the great epitaphs of Simonides; yet listen to this on the Spartans who fell at Thermopylae. "O passer-by, tell the Lacedaemonians that we lie here obeying their commands." Nothing more. Or on the Athenian dead at Plataea: "If to die nobly is the chief part of excellence, to us out of all men fortune

gave this lot: for hastening to set a crown of freedom on Hellas, we lie possessed of praise which grows not old."

We must not forget that the very conception of, and the very word for, Conscience are creations of Greece. Already Isocrates had said—what now seems a very copy-book injunction, but was more original then—"If you have done anything disgraceful, do not hope that you will escape notice. For if it is unknown to others, you will be conscious of it yourself" (*σεαυτῷ συνειδήσεις*[1]). The dignity of humanity is in the keeping of every man. Each of us can sully, or keep pure, the god that is within us. That is not the native Hebrew way of looking at morality and religion, but it is in harmony with the Hebrew way: it is not antagonistic, but complementary. Aristotle says: "If reason be divine as compared with man, the life which consists in the exercise of reason will also be divine in relation to a merely human life. And instead of listening to those who advise us as mortal men not to lift our thoughts above what is human and mortal, we ought rather, as far as possible, to put off our mortality, and make every effort to live on the exercise of the highest of our faculties; for though it be but a small part of us, yet in power and value it far surpasses all the rest. And indeed this part would even seem to constitute our true self, since it is the sovereign and the better part."[2]

Noble words and a noble thought. The greatness of man and the littleness of man are both essential doctrines in Theistic religion: both are asserted in the Bible and in Greek literature. But,

[1] Isocrates i. 16.
[2] *Nicomachean Ethics*, x. 7.

perhaps, it is in relation to the first rather than to the second that, so far as religion is concerned, we shall go to Greece, and find a supplement to the Eighth Psalm.

The greatness of man is emphasised on account of his kinship with God, with the divine. And this greatness or divine kinship becomes, with the philosophers, a source of ethical teaching. "Of all the things," says Plato, "which a man has, his soul is the most divine and most truly his own. So next to the gods, every one should honour his own soul." Then it is shown in what this honour consists and in what its opposite. Thus self-indulgence or excessive love of life, or preferring beauty to virtue, or making dishonest gains, are all a dishonouring of "this wonderful possession," the "divinest part of man." For "all the gold which is under or upon the earth is not enough to give in exchange for virtue." Or, again, in relation to man's power of attaining wisdom and knowledge, "he who has been earnest in the love of knowledge and wisdom, and has exercised his intellect more than any other part of him, must have thoughts immortal and divine, if he attain truth, and in so far as human nature is capable of sharing in immortality, he must altogether be immortal; and since he is ever cherishing the divine power, and has the divinity within him in perfect order, he will be perfectly happy." The philosophic nature has "no secret corner of illiberality; nothing can be more antagonistic than meanness to a soul which is ever longing after the whole of things both divine and human. How can he who has magnificence of mind, and is the spectator of all time and all existence," think much of human life or account death fearful? And for every man "virtue

is the health and beauty and well-being of the soul, vice its disease and weakness and deformity." How "ridiculous then is the question : which is the more profitable, to be just or to be unjust?" "No man, who is not an utter fool and coward, should be afraid of death, but he should be afraid of doing wrong. For to die leaving one's soul full of injustice is the last and worst of all evils."[1] "God," says Epictetus, "has introduced man to be a spectator of God and of His works, and not only a spectator, but an interpreter." "Being the work of such an artist as God, will you dishonour Him? He has entrusted you to yourself, and made you a deposit to yourself. He has entrusted yourself to your own care, and says, keep him for me such as he is by nature, modest, faithful, erect, unterrified, free from passion and perturbation." "Greatness of soul and manliness can be ours : God has given us powers by which we can bear everything that happens without being depressed or broken by it." "To have God for your maker and guardian and father, shall not this release us from sorrow and fears?" "If the Emperor should adopt you, no one could endure your arrogance : but if you know that you are the son of God, sprung from Him in an especial manner, will you not be elated? Will you have any mean or ignoble thoughts about yourself?" "When you have shut the door and made darkness within, remember never to say you are alone : you are not ; God is within you."[2]

Greek thought culminates in Greek philosophy. Judaism learnt philosophy from Greece, and must learn it again. A religion is valueless which does

[1] *Laws*, 726-728 ; *Republic*, 486, 444, 445 ; *Gorgias*, 522.
[2] *Discourses*, i. 6 ; ii. 8 ; i. 6 ; i. 9 ; i. 3 ; i. 14 (Long's translation).

not suit the ordinary man as well as the wise man, but a religion is also valueless which does not suit the wise man as well as the fool. Religion, like education, must permeate human society from bottom to top, and from top to bottom. Judaism must again philosophise : we need our philosophers —not the historians of philosophy merely, who tell us the philosophy of the past,—but men who will create for us a philosophy of the present, a philosophy of religion which shall preserve for Judaism our wisest Jews, and shall expound Judaism to the wise that are without. Philosophy is not antagonistic to Judaism and to the Jewish spirit : it is complementary to them. Because there is kinship between Hellas and Judaea, therefore we can fuse the spirit of Hellas with our own.

And this kinship with Greece Liberal Jews will feel the more acutely, because, like the Greeks, we were a mere petty race, a petty nation, and we became something better, larger, higher. We were a petty nation ; we became a spirit.

The Greeks, like the Hebrews, were proudly conscious of their difference from, and superiority to, other men, and this consciousness of superiority generated a certain pride, a certain hostility, a certain disdain.

The Hebrews, on the one side : the "nations," on the other. The Greeks, on the one side : the "barbarians," on the other. Herodotus says that in his day the Hellenic race had been for a long while marked off from the barbarian as "more intelligent and more emancipated from silly nonsense."[1] To the Hebrew all the "nations" were idolaters, and all idolaters are fools. "They know not, neither do

[1] Herodotus i. 60. Cp. Murray, *Four Stages of Greek Religion*, p. 57.

they understand ; for He has shut their eyes that they cannot see, and their hearts that they cannot understand." Nevertheless, the Jewish religion tended to universalism. "The oneness of God," as Professor Butcher said, "carried with it, as an implicit consequence, the oneness of humanity. . . . No ancient constitution accorded to strangers such a position as they enjoyed under the Mosaic code. . . . The rights of the alien are placed on a clear religious basis—the Unity of God involving the brotherhood of man. . . . At the heart of Judaism, beneath its hard and often repelling exclusiveness, the idea of universal humanity was being matured." [1]

Till the Stoics came, of whom the founder—strange, striking and almost pathetic fact—was a Semite in blood, Zeno the Cypriote, the Greeks found it very hard to reach out to the idea of universalism. Even Aristotle, as we know, thought that certain peoples, that is, the Greeks, were fitted by nature to rule, and others, that is, the whole barbarian world, were fitted by nature to obey. Yet even earlier than Zeno, there were adumbrations of a wider doctrine. Plato, in the *Politicus*, laughs at the logical folly of those who cut off the Hellenes as one species, and all the other species of mankind, which are innumerable, and have no ties or common language, they include under the single name of barbarians.[2] And we know from Strabo that Eratosthenes blamed those who would divide all mankind into Greeks and barbarians, and suggested that they should rather be divided according to their vices and virtues, for amongst the Greeks there are many worthless characters, and many highly civilised

[1] *Harvard Lectures on Greek Subjects*, pp. 33-36.
[2] *Politicus*, 262.

(ἀστεῖοι) among the barbarians.[1] More significant for our purpose is the famous, if isolated, remark of Isocrates, who in his praise of Athens says that the teaching of his city has gone forth into many lands, so that the Hellene has become the name of a disposition of mind rather than of a race, and that those are now more properly called Hellenes who participate in Hellenic culture than those who belong to the Hellenic race.[2] Hellenism is less a matter of birth than of mind. It is a spiritual, not a physical, quality. Precisely so do we claim and desire that Judaism should be much less a matter of birth than of faith. It is a spiritual, and not a physical, possession. Philo, touched as he was in different ways and measures by the spirit of Greece and of Judaea, thought and said the same. "Kinship," he said, "is in truth not reckoned merely by blood; it is rather doing the same actions and seeking the same ends."[3]

It was, however, the Stoics who preached a conscious and full-blown universalism. They took up and developed the teaching of the Cynics, while Antisthenes, the Cynic founder, himself had carried forward, and made explicit, implications in the teaching of Socrates.

It was Diogenes the Cynic who, when questioned as to the state of which he was a citizen, replied, "I am a cosmopolitan," a citizen of the world.[4] Was

[1] Strabo, book i. *ad fin.* Strabo himself disagrees with Eratosthenes. The reason for this division, he says, was because those who made it "found that on one side justice, knowledge and the force of reason reigned supreme, but their contraries on the other" (*τοῖς μὲν ἐπικρατεῖ τὸ νόμιμον καὶ τὸ παιδείας καὶ λόγων οἰκεῖον, τοῖς δὲ τἀναντία.*)

[2] Isocrates, *Panegyricus*, 50 *ad fin.*

[3] Philo, *De Nobilitate*, chap. i. (Mangey, ii. p. 438.)

[4] Diogenes Laertius, *Life of Diogenes*, 63, *ἐρωτηθεὶς πόθεν εἴη, κοσμοπολίτης, ἔφη.* Cp. Zeller, *Philosophie der Griechen*, ii. 1 (4th ed.), p. 325, n. 1.

this teaching, this breaking down of the barriers between Greek and barbarian, this reduction of all men to a common level, from which they only rise by superiority in virtue and wisdom, specially sympathetic to Zeno, himself of non-Hellenic blood? It is attractive to think that the broad human philanthropy and cosmopolitanism of the Stoics, which have had so deep an effect upon European civilisation (for we know how, in addition to the specifically ethical teaching of men like Epictetus and Seneca, the Stoic universalism entered into Roman law and Christian doctrine), may partially have been due to the Semitic origin of the founder. However this may be, Zeno and his followers embraced with ardour the Cynic cosmopolitanism. From Zeno to Aurelius, on this point all Stoics took the same line. "In so far as I am Antoninus," said the great Emperor, "my city and fatherland is Rome, but as a human being it is the world."[1]

This broadness of view was essentially religious. "If," says Mr. Adam, "we would understand the true historical significance of the Stoic cosmopolitanism, we must above all things remember that it is essentially a religious ideal, since the bond of citizenship is man's unity with man in virtue of his unity with God."[2] And this religious ideal of the Stoics, which can still move and strengthen us, as we meet it in those remains of Stoic literature which have been preserved to us, fits in with, fits on to, our own Jewish universalism. For we, too, after a severe struggle, have won through to a religious universalism; we, too, feel deeply the sense of human brotherhood. Already an old Rabbi had said that the verse in

[1] vi. 44; cp. Adam, *The Vitality of Platonism*, p. 144.
[2] *The Vitality of Platonism*, p. 146.

Genesis, "These are the generations of Adam," was the greatest in the Scripture. It taught the unity of man in the image of God. But in Liberal Judaism religious universalism stands out with fullest clearness as a truth and as an ideal. We recognise the equality of all men before the one God, and the dignity of all men as partakers of the divine spirit. For religious purposes we maintain our self-identity and our separateness, but our religion, in its doctrines and in its expression, in its theories and in its forms, is not for ourselves only, but for all who haply may find it suited to their religious needs.

A man, who has within his brain and heart the best thought and spirit of Judaea and of Greece, is indeed well fitted for the battle of life. He is provided with panoply to protect him against the shocks of fortune; and he is given a spear with which to enter bravely upon the fight.

The greatest of his spiritual possessions comes from Judaea. The doctrine of the progress of mankind, and of the Messianic age, is hardly known to the Greek at all. It is even remarkable, and may perhaps account for the undertone of sad resignation in much of their literature, that the Stoics were satisfied with their grim teaching of the absorption of all things into the divine fire, together with the repetition and recurrence of everything in gigantic cycles of time. Faint and inadequate again is the Greek teaching respecting personal immortality. Above all, the doctrine of the Divine Father who knows and rules and cares and loves, with whom and with whose spirit each human soul can have communion,—*this* Theism never becomes the fixed and definite doctrine of Hellas or of any philosophic school. Seneca of all the Stoics approaches nearest

to it, but it could not be reached, and made distinct and luminous, and become general and diffused, through Stoic, or indeed through any other Greek, philosophy. Polytheism, on the one hand, pantheism, on the other, prevented its growth. It is true that the later Stoics, and the eclectic teachers who succeeded them, men such as Plutarch or Dion Chrysostom or Maximus of Tyre, often preach a monotheism which seems not merely theoretically complete, but practically and emotionally satisfying. "The infinite benevolence of God is asserted in the face of all appearances to the contrary." A "loving and righteous will" is spoken of as at the heart of the universe.[1] God is not only within the human soul: He is also without, and He is represented as the loving ruler, the helper and the guardian of every individual soul. But the relations of these teachers to the official polytheism prevented their nobler doctrine from exercising a wide effect. Few of them thought it necessary, or politic, or even true, to say that the old gods were nonentities, and that their worship should be utterly abandoned and destroyed. They compromised, partly because they did not think it possible for the "masses" to do without their gods, their temples and their sacrifices, partly because, in spite of their monotheistic language, the divine, in their opinion, could and did manifest itself in divers forms and ways. Maximus's defence of idolatry is tender, tolerant and beautiful, but it needed a harsher and more exclusive monotheism to capture the world.[2] Moreover, monotheism needed a worship and culture of its own, and with these the philosophers and the sages were unable to supply it. For the

[1] Dill, *Roman Society from Nero to Marcus Aurelius*, p. 393.
[2] Murray, *Four Stages of Greek Religion*, p. 98.

ordinary man the teaching was both too aloof and too indulgent. It did not put something definite and practical in the place of the old worship and the old superstitions. It gave a theory, gentle and luminous, but it stopped short of an embodiment and a practice. We, however, to-day can, to some extent, be helped and edified by this eclectic monotheism. We connect it with, and add it on to, our own. It forms a supplement, a useful addition. The main source of our monotheism and the substance of it are Jewish. The Psalms speak to us more nearly and more movingly of God than Seneca or Epictetus, be it that we are in the more direct line of spiritual descent from their authors, be it that they are actually at closer grips with their subject, or, in spite of their religious inspiration, are yet less removed from the general level of struggling humanity.

The loving God, transcendent and yet near, the spirit of the world, yet above the world, creator and friend of man, source of human mind and of human righteousness,— He comes to us, not from Athens, but from Jerusalem. Out of Zion has He gone forth. And from Zion still spring our deepest consolation and our strongest stimulus. It is the God of Judaism who urges us forward in His service: He is our bulwark and our refuge. He inspires and He comforts. He is our goal and our home. He is our hope and our star.

Yet if we are led to the conclusion that the deepest and most potent motives for action, and the profoundest external comfort, come from Judaea, I am inclined to think that our most effective inward panoply comes from Greece. God our refuge, God the object of our love—that is mainly Jewish. The dignity of man and of the human mind—that is

mainly Greek. I say "mainly" with emphasis, both because in justice to Greece and to Judaea the adverb is needed, and because Greece can only reinforce Judaea, and Judaea Greece, so far as each partakes to some extent of the special virtue of the other. With the panoply that I have called the dignity of man and of the human mind much follows and is associated. Its true cause is man's kinship with God, and it is by no means necessarily accompanied by conceit or incompatible with humility. In strictest harmony with it is the doctrine that the only true good is the mind's own excellence, virtue, the only true evil, the mind's own corruption, wrongdoing or sin. Virtue, said Antisthenes, is the only weapon which can never be wrenched away from us.[1] All outward things, all material possessions, all the gifts or the shocks of fortune, all pleasures or pains, are neither truly good nor truly evil. Suffering may be a discipline for virtue : it is not for man to complain of it. The mind, the true self, is superior to, and independent of, all that may befall the body or the environment of the body. The prosperity of the wicked, the adversity of the righteous, are no puzzles. For, from one point of view, prosperity and adversity, having no inward relation to virtue, are neither good nor evil, and may thus justly happen with complete indiscrimination both to the wicked and the virtuous; from another point of view, they are the just retributions of wickedness and virtue. Prosperity hardens the wicked in his wickedness, adversity hardens the virtuous in his virtue. That whom God loves He chastens is a thought which became as familiar to the Greeks as to the Hebrews. Not only need his own misfortunes and the prosperity of his "enemy" in no

[1] Diogenes Laertius, *Life of Antisthenes*, 12, ἀναφαίρετον ὅπλον ἡ ἀρετή.

wise impair the calm independence of the righteous and the wise, not only will he neither repine nor fret, but if occasion should arise, he will help his "enemy" and forgive him. Hatred is unfitting to man, because man partakes of the divine spirit.

Anger disturbs the serenity and clearness of the human mind. It clouds and dims that reason, which is not only human, but also divine. Anger degrades. It pushes man down from the higher level, in which he rises towards the divine, to the lower level in which he sinks and inclines towards the animal. To be as human as you can, is also to be as divine as you can. And human, in that sense, tended also to mean humble. Philanthropy—the noble word, a purely Greek creation—is the mark of him whose vital or rational principle is akin with the divine. Even for your own sake, then, remain calm: as against the shocks of adversity, so also against the machinations of the sinner. Remember the involuntary nature of wickedness—so especially according to the Stoics; and also how, apparently, there must always be these antagonisms and antagonists to the good. Therefore, help, pity, teach, forbear.

"When you are offended with any man's shameless conduct," says Aurelius, "ask yourself, is it possible that shameless men should not be in the world? It is not possible." But, muses the Emperor, what *is* possible is for you not to be irritated or harmed by another's shamelessness; you can correct him, teach him, and forgive him. "Kindness is invincible, if it is genuine. Tell the violent man who seeks to do you harm: Not so, my son; *I* shall not be injured, you are injuring *yourself*." "As horses neigh, so must the bad man do wrong. If he annoys you, seek to cure his disposition." The one thing the

Emperor would have loved to do was to pass his life in study: he would have loved to read widely and become a learned man. That could never be. "You cannot be learned," he writes; "you have no leisure or opportunity, but you can be superior to pleasure and pain, you can refrain from anger with stupid and ungrateful people; you can even care for them." "Wickedness does no harm to the whole, to the universe; so too the wickedness of one man can do no harm to another."

"Begin the morning," says the poor weary Emperor, "by saying to yourself, I shall meet with the deceitful, the proud, the unsocial, the envious. They have these qualities because they are ignorant of the truly good and the truly evil. Yet these men are akin to me, and they share the same divinity. How then can I be angry with my kinsman or hate him? We are made for co-operation; to be angry with him is to act against him."[1] "Bear and forbear" were the watchwords of Epictetus, and nobly did Aurelius fulfil the maxim of his master. Pittacus, one of the "seven wise men," who is supposed to have lived in the seventh century B.C., after being wronged by a man and having the power of punishing him, let him go, saying, "Forgiveness is better than revenge; for forgiveness is the sign of a gentle nature, but revenge is the sign of a savage nature." "Men exist," muses Aurelius, "for the sake of one another: teach them then, or bear with them." The sinner merely injures himself, not his enemy. The righteous can but pity and pardon him. Moreover, both are members of the human order, both are social beings; hence the righteous will not only pity the sinner, but he will help him. Men must bear with each other and love

[1] Aurelius, ix. 42; xi. 18; xii. 16; viii. 8; viii. 55; ii. 1.

one another. The Cynics and the later Stoics and Eclectics conceived the idea and the duty (which we have found nobly characteristic of the life and the teaching of Jesus) that the wrecks and outcasts of mankind, the sinners and the reprobates, must be actively succoured and redeemed. The good physician must not be frightened to attend the sick. When Antisthenes was reproached for going about among depraved persons, he said, "Physicians also live with those that are ill, and yet they do not catch fevers."[1]

All these thoughts and teachings have their measure of truth. All help, strengthen and console. If we try to analyse the thoughts which for us alleviate and make tolerable the problem of suffering, which help and strengthen us in the manly endurance of sorrow, trouble and loss, we shall surely find that these Greek ideas form a part of them. "Thou," says Wordsworth, addressing Toussaint l'Ouverture,

> thou hast great allies;
> Thy friends are exultations, agonies,
> And love, and man's unconquerable mind.

That is more Greek than Hebrew. Browning's Rabbi ben Ezra expresses the harmony of the two:

> Rejoice we are allied
> To that which doth provide
> And not partake, effect and not receive!
> A spark disturbs our clod;
> Nearer we hold of God
> Who gives, than of His tribes that take, I must believe.
>
> Then, welcome each rebuff,
> That turns earth's smoothness rough,
> Each sting that bids nor sit nor stand but go!

[1] Diogenes Laertius, *Life of Antisthenes*, 6.

Be our joy three parts pain!
Strive, and hold cheap the strain;
Learn, nor account the pang, dare, never grudge the throe.

That is neither pure Hebrew nor pure Greek. It is a union and a development of both. In this spirit may we continue with God's help to move forward to fuller light, drawing sustenance and inspiration from both Athens and Jerusalem.

V

LIBERAL JUDAISM AND DEMOCRACY

The importance and complexity of the subject of the present chapter need no proof. It will be exceedingly difficult to know how to fix the boundaries and draw the line. For, as Liberal Judaism is a religion, our particular subject obviously ought to include a discussion of the relation of religion as a whole to democracy. This gigantic enquiry would need learning and ability of which the present writer is destitute, and which not many living writers possess. Lord Acton could have undertaken it, as, indeed, in his published essays, there are tantalising fragmentary contributions towards it. As his projected history of Liberty seemed to include *all* history within its range, so might also the history of the relation of religion to democracy. And narrow the enquiry how one will or may, it yet must reach much beyond the limits of a religion which, like Judaism, lies, for the most part, so far away from the general stream of European, or world, civilisation and history. The difficulty of dealing with the subject is thereby increased. For in truth as to the relation of Judaism or Liberal Judaism to Democracy we have nothing, or hardly anything, to go upon by way of record or experience. Judaism has lived in a corner. It has

not been the prevailing religion of kingdoms and states. It has only been the creed of a small minority, only lately admitted to citizen rights, whose religion, so far as the state is concerned, has nothing to do with the citizenship of its believers. And yet the more general considerations cannot be left out of account. They cannot wholly be neglected. For, at the present time, some of the great difficulties which confront Liberal Judaism, or for the matter of that, which confront Judaism generally, in its relations with democracy, are difficulties inherent in Theistic religion as such, and not, specifically, in the Jewish form of such Theistic religion. Nevertheless, it must here be sought to confine the subject, so far as possible, to its Jewish and Liberal Jewish aspects.

It is clear that it is of most profound interest and importance to Liberal Judaism to find out whether there is anything in the noun or in the adjective or in the whole, the unity, which is the result of the combination, to make it an unsuitable religion for the mass, for the "working classes," for the "democracy." For even though a fresh development of religion, or a new phase of a particular religion, may start in a limited section of society, it cannot stay there. Unless Liberal Judaism can be the religion of "East End" as well as "West End," of the "poor" as well as the "rich," of the "masses" as well as the "classes," its future, even within the Jewish community, must be very limited and even precarious. Still less can it look forward to any future of power outside the Jewish pale, and amid the big and general world.

It must, I believe, be acknowledged that Liberal Judaism, so far, has not made much progress among the "masses." Its adherents in England, Germany and America have, so far, been mainly drawn from

the upper and the middle classes. Now, a man's a man for a' that, and a woman is a woman. All have souls to be saved: Judaism and Liberal Judaism want them all. It is no small credit to Liberal Judaism that, without it, a number of persons would have been lost to Judaism altogether. Even though they may have belonged to the now unfashionable "classes," we may be glad to have retained them and their children. Nor are numbers everything. And a type or phase of Judaism which did appeal to the "working" classes, but not to the middle and upper classes, would be just as unstable and inadequate as a type which appealed to these but not to those.

In discussing, and seeking to ascertain, the reasons why Liberal Judaism has not yet penetrated "down," we shall have to consider whether these reasons are relative to its specifically *Liberal* elements, or to elements which are common to it and to traditional Judaism as well, or to the general fact that Liberal Judaism is a *religion*. It may, indeed, well be that the reasons come from all three divisions, and that the remedies to be adopted must be relative to them all.

But, first of all, it must be noted that one special reason why Liberal Judaism has never penetrated far among the "masses" is because there have been no serious attempts at such penetration. The case has gone against us by default. If Liberal Jews do not try to push their faith, no wonder that it does not spread.

What are the reasons for this curious state of things? They are not difficult to observe. They are dependent upon the condition of the Jewish masses, and upon the history of Liberal Judaism itself. Beginning in Germany, the Liberal Jewish movement spread to America, where it flourished and

developed among the American Jews of German origin. These Jews belonged to the middle and upper grades of Jewish society. The movement, though it had always a theoretic basis, was in origin largely practical. It was an attempt to make Judaism more consonant with the life and the environment of "emancipated" Jews. It sought to heal the growing gap, the growing divorce, between the sentiments, opinions, judgments and practices of Jews in all other departments of life with their religious institutions, observances and worship. The Jewish masses were untouched by the movement, or its need, both on the practical and on the theoretic side. They were located, for the most part, in lands where they were still subject to disabilities, or they were collected into groups where, even though not actively persecuted, they could, and did, continue to live the old life in all its aspects. They did not yet mingle with the world at large, and were not subject to its influences. The two branches of Jews lived a distinct life, and the one did not interfere with the other. On the whole, they were also locally separated. Reform or Liberal Judaism had nothing to do with, and was never brought to the notice of, the vast Jewish communities in Russia, Poland, Rumania and Galicia. And when great influxes from these communities appeared in the West, it was generally felt that they had brought with them a type of Judaism which suited them, and which must in no wise be disturbed. A tradition grew up that the "east enders," the Russian and Polish and Galician Jews, were, and must always be, strictly orthodox and traditional, and that Reform or Liberal Judaism was not for them. It was not fitted for them, and they were not fitted for it. In this curious view there was a certain honourableness.

It was also partly due to the general Jewish dislike of religious propaganda. A group of Jews had a right to come together, and provide for their own religious needs and tastes. They had no right to push their opinions afield, or to offer what suited them for the approbation of others. The idea that it is a duty to diffuse what you believe to be *true* was not sympathetic to Jewish minds. And, indeed, so far as Orthodox Judaism did and does provide a vehicle for living a noble and spiritual life, who would wish to expel it from those souls who lead such lives? But it is to be feared that this right sensitiveness and delicacy, this justified dislike to upsetting faith, even when portions of that faith may seem to you untrue, have been pushed too far. It has been too rashly assumed that the Russian, Polish and Galician "masses" must be for ever wedded to Orthodox Judaism. What was good for, and suitable to, the Ghetto in Russia must also be good for, and suitable to, the Russian Jews in England and America. What was believed and practised by the grandparents would, under wholly different conditions, be believed and practised by the grandchildren. The result has been that we are only gradually waking up to the realisation that a considerable proportion of the grandchildren both in Russia and in the West are estranged, not only from Orthodox Judaism, but from religion altogether; while of another portion it is, I fear, true to say that their Judaism, traditional, such as it is, in practice, is yet, so far as spirituality, depth and clarity go, in a very enfeebled and unsatisfactory condition. For all this, as it may be relative to the Jewish communities in Eastern Europe, Liberal Judaism may be blameless. It is, however, a very different story as regards the "Eastern" Jews who are settled

in the West. *Their* religious impoverishment and destitution are, partly at least, due to Liberal Jewish inaction, aloofness and blindness. And it must, I fear, be added that the honourable scrupulosity, which I have just mentioned, has a much less respectable ally. For it is undoubtedly far less *troublesome*, and rouses far fewer animosities, to leave the whole matter severely alone. Let Orthodox Judaism look after its own sores.

If a large number of the Jewish "masses," both in the East and in the West are becoming estranged from Orthodox Judaism, could, or can, they be brought into the Liberal Jewish fold? Or is the argument to be: "If these people are ceasing to be Orthodox Jews, still less are they becoming Liberal Jews. The reasons which remove them from orthodoxy are reasons which go to the root of all religion. They will never stop short at, and take refuge within, any half-way house. If *any* form of Judaism could appeal to them, it would be traditional Judaism. If *even* traditional Judaism cannot hold them, still less could Liberal Judaism. For Orthodox Judaism has much which they care for: yet they abandon it; Liberal Judaism includes the things for which they abandon Orthodox Judaism, but possesses nothing which they care for. Why, then, should they adopt it? It has nothing on which they will lay hold."

Well, that remains to be seen. Meanwhile what *are* the reasons which have made so many "Eastern" Jews, whether residing in East or West, sit loose to the Orthodox Judaism of their fathers? I am ready to allow that the main reasons are not difficulties of historical criticism. It is not the knowledge that the Pentateuch is not a unity, or that its various codes are generations later than Moses, which has

primarily affected the Jewish "masses" in the direction of unbelief. It is not theories of inspiration or revelation. The reasons, so far as they are of a theoretic nature, are of a more general and a more fundamental kind. But they are not *all* of this more general kind, and even those that are, or many of them, could be tackled by Liberal Judaism (as I believe) more easily and satisfactorily than by Orthodox Judaism. Moreover, though the details of Biblical criticism may not worry and perturb, I am sure that, to the younger generation, the Biblical difficulties as regards the "unethical" passages, and the lower elements, and the miracles, do often constitute a veritable stumbling-block. Crude attacks upon the Old Testament filter through into Jewish ears and minds. And it is only Liberal Judaism which can *deal* with them, just as it would be only Liberal Judaism which—if people are educated in it from the beginning—can prevent these difficulties from arising or from being difficulties at all. What can Orthodox Judaism do? It can only say, "Take the whole, or leave the whole." It cannot allow and accept the truth in these crude attacks, while pointing out the falsehood. Again, we must remember that while many may go on to doubts and denial of the very bases of religion, such scepticism might have been avoided, had the overthrow of the Bible been stayed. The one leads on to the other. So too as regards the practice of ceremonial commands. Here too Liberal Judaism could help.

It is not that Liberal Judaism says that the ceremonial commands and ordinances do not matter. It is that the point of view is changed. Orthodox Judaism can only say: "Here is the inspired Pentateuch, here is the inspired Oral Law: here is the

Code which embodies the two : accept it or reject it." It has no living authority with which it can envisage modern life and say : "Under *these* conditions the following modifications of the Code are to be made." It can use neither authority nor common sense. Liberal Judaism, with its distinctions between the temporary and the eternal, the human and the divine, the obsolete and the permanent, the means and the end, the ceremonial and the moral, can deal with the varying conditions of life. It can show when sacrifice is desirable, and when sacrifice would be wrong. It can show when breaking the letter of a particular ordinance, or disregarding a particular ceremony, is harmful or right. It can show that religion is something other than a mere collection of ordinances and doings. Take, for instance, the crucial and constant question of the Sabbath. There is, I believe, a good deal of evidence to show that the compulsory breaking of the Sabbath Law by the necessity of earning a livelihood is, in many cases, the method by which the whole edifice of personal religion is broken down. The conscience is seared by the violation of the Sabbath. If the Sabbath is broken in one way, it can be broken in another. If its peace is invaded by the workshop, it can be invaded by the picture palace and the theatre. If *one* Law is broken, *another* can be broken. Breaking the Sabbath law means breaking the Law, breaking the Law means giving up Judaism, giving up Judaism means abandoning religion. The first violation of the Sabbath can lead, by fatal and facile progression, to an ignoring, or even to a denial, of God. Whereas Liberal Judaism can prevent the descent. Under given conditions it may be right to work on Saturdays, but one may feel the Sabbath in one's heart even though one goes to work. An hour

in the day may be consecrated to private or to public worship. Because it is right to work, it is not thereby made right to coarsen and degrade the Sabbath eve and the Sabbath peace by visiting a picture palace or a theatre. Again, if, under certain conditions, it is right to work on Saturdays, a man or woman who does so work is no less a Jew or a Jewess than are those who do not need to work upon that day. The bases and fundamentals of religion remain where they were or what they were. Whatever the life of the individual, God is to be reverenced and loved, whether work upon the Sabbath is carried on or not. All the verities of religion and all the essentials of the religious life—justice, truth, humility, love, prayer, communion with God—remain untouched, —as obligatory, as valid, and as adorable, as before.

My contention, therefore, is that Liberal Judaism can arrest the process of religious disintegration. Liberal Judaism can keep many a soul faithful to Judaism and to God. I claim that just for the Jewish masses is Liberal Judaism so entirely advisable and even essential. Where Orthodox Judaism must stand sadly by, and witness the ruin, Liberal Judaism can reach out the gripping hand to enable the stumbler to regain his footing.

But, then, it is said that Liberal Judaism, with the best intentions, is unable to do all this, because it has nothing to offer which the Jewish masses would care to accept. Its religion is too thin, too attenuated, too "intellectual," only suited for a small group of educated persons. It can no more dominate, and be accepted by, the Jewish masses than the Christian masses could be dominated by the Unitarianism of Dr. Martineau.

What does this criticism imply, if it is true?

Some very curious conclusions emerge. If the Jewish masses fall away from Orthodox Judaism, what is to be their fate? If Liberal Judaism cannot hold them and give them shelter, it cannot be contended that they will accept either Orthodox Christianity or Unitarianism. If so, the only other possibility is religious wreckage and unbelief.

There are other curious deductions to be drawn from the view that Liberal Judaism and Unitarianism must both be unacceptable to the "masses." For let us assume that the Jewish masses are ultimately to be reconverted to Orthodox Judaism. What about the non-Jewish masses? The theory of Orthodox Judaism is that these unfortunate people are to become Unitarians of a very pronounced type, but they are not to become Orthodox Jews. The Law is only for the Jews. The non-Jewish masses are to be content with the mere dogma of the divine Unity. Any outward embodiment of that simple faith they are to fashion for themselves. But is there not here a palpable contradiction? The purer and whiter the Unitarianism (and it will be less "historic" far than Dr. Martineau's, for it will be much less Christian), the less will there be in it of substance and body for the masses to hold on to and to live by. And yet this pure and white Unitarianism is *ex hypothesi* to be their religion—their only religion and the sum and substance of their religion—in the Golden Age! Which is wrong? The critical judgment upon Liberal Judaism and Unitarianism: or the vision of the Golden Age?

Let us return, however, and confine ourselves to Liberal Judaism, and to the criticism upon it. It is too thin; too "intellectual." But there is something more. What is also said is this. What has kept

the Jews together in the past? What have been the features of the religion which have kept it going? What has really appealed to the hearts and imaginations of the multitude? The answer is: just those things which Liberal Judaism rejects or attenuates. To some extent, indeed, these are also the very things which the conditions of modern life make it impossible to maintain and conserve in the Western world. But this last admission only proves the necessity for segregation and "the national life" and the "national centre": it does not weaken by a hair's breadth the argument against Liberal Judaism. It may be true enough that the faith in God kept Judaism going and kept the Jews faithful to Judaism. But it was a faith in God *clothed and clad.* It was clothed in forms: it was clad in ceremonies. And these forms and ceremonies were the conserving agency. They were beloved. And they were particularistic and national. They were picturesque. They penetrated daily life; they entered and sanctified the home. It was not a religion which seeks to universalise itself, to drop its national dress and colour, to become suited for men and women of every race—it was not such a religion as *that* which united the Jews together, enabled them to survive persecution, and to persist through unheard-of sufferings and trials. It was a frankly national religion which achieved this miracle: Israel was in no wise a symbol for humanity, but stood out in contrast to it, and this separatist and distinctive group, which "humanity" hated, and which reacted against that hate, prayed to a God who, whatever else He was, was also—first and foremost, and in no ethereal sense—the God of Israel.

It may be true that a large and growing percentage

of the Jewish masses is becoming estranged from this God and from this national religion. But these people will reject with scorn the caricature of it which you dish up for them under the title of Liberal Judaism. If they have become estranged from orthodoxy by theoretical reasons, they will not be drawn to your dogmas; if they have become estranged from orthodoxy through the pressure of circumstances, you have nothing to offer them that they will care to accept in lieu of what they have been compelled to forgo. On the contrary. Hundreds and thousands will, for a long while yet, love to observe relics and patches of outward orthodoxy, even though they no longer believe in the dogma of the Perfect and Divine and Mosaic Law which underlies them. For these relics and patches appeal to the deepest instincts of their souls: they are historic, national, poetic, Jewish, separatist, distinctive. And that is what the Jewish masses like and want. Your Liberal Jewish leaders and preachers may be good Englishmen or Americans. To the Russian and Polish and Galician masses they are not good *Jews*, and over these masses those alien leaders can have no influence, just as to them the Liberal Jewish doctrine, with its universalism and its purity, can make no appeal.

What can be our reply to these arguments and allegations? So far as it may be simply stated as a fact that the Jewish masses are nationalist in sympathy, and that therefore Liberal Judaism, because it is anti-nationalist and universalist, can make no appeal to them, no direct reply is possible. I have to admit that Liberal Judaism, in my view and conception of it, *is* anti-nationalist. It does seek to be a catholic, and not a particularistic and national,

religion. It *does*, in assessing the worth of a ceremony, primarily consider its religious content and its ethical bearing. But these facts do not impair the *truth* of Liberal Judaism or lessen its value. To begin with, the Jewish masses, if they are taken as equivalent to the Russian and Rumanian Jews, have hardly yet tasted liberty. Till a man *can* be a free Russian, he is likely enough to consider himself as a Jew and nothing else. But when he *can* be a free Russian, and when he has been a free Russian for a couple of generations, *then* he will require and appreciate a religion which is *more* than national: then he will want to have a religion which shall be supernational and universal. Transplant your Russian Jew to England and America, and he cannot lose in a few years the feelings of many generations: if clever orators inflame his chauvinistic and nationalist passions, he will not become a pure Englishman or American of the Jewish faith, but he will still cling to his old nationalist conceptions: he will be a hybrid creature, not quite American or English, and yet not quite a mere "Jew" and nothing else whatever. But his children will become more anglicised or americanised: among *them* Liberal Judaism will have its chance. Only let the Liberal Jewish leaders be true to their Liberal Judaism in its purity and universalism; let them have courage; let them labour; let them not rashly assume that the "masses" are not for them. The masses *will* be for them and for the truth. To think otherwise is faithlessness and cowardice. It would be sheer atheism and unbelief to suppose that the "masses," who are notoriously being lost to, and drifting away from, Orthodoxy, can never be won to a Judaism of another texture and a less "nationalist" hue.

So far then as the contention is that the Jewish masses *must* always be "nationalist" in their sympathies and feelings and aspirations, and that a religion, which does not satisfy them here, *cannot* suit or appeal to them, I am not perturbed. I see no reason why the Jewish masses must, or should, or will, always be nationalist in their views. With the growth of freedom their particularist and separatist tendencies will pass away. They will become Russians, English, Americans, as the case may be. If not, the deduction would be that they will become religionless, as, indeed, so many of them are to-day. For Orthodox Jews they will not remain: Christians they will not, I think, ever become. If, then, Liberal Judaism has no attraction for them, are they doomed to irreligion for ever? Perish so unbelieving and hopeless a thought.

But the argument went deeper. It was alleged that Orthodox Judaism might be true or false, but, at all events, it was not a thin and attenuated religion. It had something to lay hold of, something inspiring; something to kindle the imagination; to create passion and love. And this something was the Law with its ceremonies and injunctions: or, again, it was Israel, the people, with its hopes and its sorrows and its glories, with its destiny and its God. Liberal Judaism possessed none of these excellences. Just in the same way, Orthodox Christianity might be true, or it might be false. But at all events it was not a pale and attenuated religion. It was concrete and rich; it had also something to lay hold of; something for which to rouse sacrifice, to kindle love. That something is the figure of the divine Master: his life, his death, his resurrection; the incarnation, the atonement. These doctrines can

move and appeal. But the Unitarianism or Theism, which may be left when Orthodox Christianity (in any of its various forms) has been removed, will be wanting in driving force. The less "Christian," the less impelling, the less attractive. It would seem a bad outlook for religion, if the democracies of the future must either be orthodox or religionless!

The argument seems to me strange on the lips of those who profess to be staunch believers in democracy. "What one is, why may not millions be?" At any rate, there seems no reason in the nature of things why a religion which appeals to a hundred should not appeal to a thousand, or why a creed which appeals to a thousand should not appeal to a million. If the appeal of Liberal Judaism depends upon education, may not education spread? If the doctrines of Liberal Judaism are *true*, why should we despair of the attraction of truth? Again, if to a hundred people Liberal Judaism seems distinctive, Jewish, worth living for, and working for, and making sacrifices for, why should it not seem so to a million?

Nor is it the case that in Liberal Judaism, though God is retained, Israel is dispensed with. Israel the *Church* is a greater conception than Israel the *nation*, and could evoke an even more passionate response. Israel the Servant is a nobler conception than either Israel the wandering People, or Israel in the future, ruling and triumphant. Can we not teach the Jewish masses to cherish that great conception of calling and of service? Can we not make it bring forth passion and enthusiasm? Israel as the divine witness: Israel as the servant of humanity: would a free Jewish democracy be unable to enter into, to cherish and to be faithful to, these ideas? Would they not

clothe mere Theism with a special garb? Would they not give to it, so far as the God-idea itself needs such setting and embodiment, warmth and colour? Israel, not as an exclusive people over against humanity, but Israel as the Ingatherer, Israel as the Conscious Labourer: are not these great conceptions, which can make Liberal Judaism a religion neither attenuated nor pale?

And here it might be well to mention a point in which Liberal Judaism would seem a more truly democratic religion than Orthodox Judaism. If the doctrine of the chosen people, of the *Segulah*, means anything like privilege, then it is essentially undemocratic. If Israel is more beloved of God than other races and peoples, that is undemocratic. It is unfortunately true that a people which dislikes privilege within its own ranks has sometimes no objection to privilege as between itself and others. But religion has to withstand the limitations of the democrat no less than it has to withstand the prejudices of oligarchy. The true democrat should fight shy of any doctrine of election, if it means privilege and special gifts. But if the privilege is but a privilege of discipline, and the gifts are sufferings, then the undemocratic feature is removed. If the election is solely an election for service, if Israel has been chosen less for his own sake than for the sake of humanity, no democrat need refuse to accept the doctrine. He too will be willing to believe. He need not refuse to attach himself to an aristocracy, which may be joined by all who will, and who ask, not to rule, but to serve.

There would, then, seem to be no valid reason why Liberal Judaism should not hold the emancipated masses, whether these live in Russia or Rumania or

Galicia, or, living in the west, or across the sea, are only of Russian, Rumanian, or Galician *origin*. If we have but faith, the difficulties will be overcome, and the desired consummation will be realised. Faith in our cause and in its truth ; this, on the one hand ; on the other, faithful and constant labour.

A full general discussion of the relation of religion to democracy is, as I have already said, beyond my capacity and knowledge, and in a small volume such as this it would be also out of place. But it may be neither impossible nor unfitting to glance at a few democratic difficulties concerning religion, and to see how far Judaism and Liberal Judaism can meet them.

Democracy appears to stand for equality. Organised religion has too often stood, or seemed to stand, for distinctions ; it has seemed to be the preserve of the great ones or of the happy ones of the earth rather than of the dispossessed and the empty ; of the comfortable few rather than of the impoverished many. Whatever justification there may have been, or may be, for so strange a misconception of religion as regards *Christianity* cannot be considered here. But as regards *Judaism*, if we take the ages through, it has been more the religion of the poor and the oppressed than it has been the religion of the comfortable, the grand and the wealthy. Up till quite modern times, it would, I suppose, be true to say that the Jewish working classes have kept closer to their religion in belief and in practice than any other section of the Jews. Up till quite modern times it would, I suppose, be true to say that Judaism *has* been a democratic religion. So far as there was an aristocracy among the Jews, it was an aristocracy of learning. And many of these aristocrats sprang

from the "people" and were extremely needy. The Synagogue was the home of the poor quite as much as, or even more than, it was the home of the rich. This can hardly be said with equal truth of it to-day. Modern religious organisations require money with which to run them. They tend to get into the hands and the management of the rich, or, at any rate, of the middle class. These pay the piper, and these call the tune. They appoint the officials and provide them with their salaries. The income of a place of worship is often obtained from the rents of its seats. The well-to-do sit in front, the less wealthy behind: quite at the back are some free seats for the poor. It is natural that the comfortable seat-holder, who takes his daily bath, should not care to sit next to a man who reeks of onions and uncleanliness. This oligarchic tendency is counteracted by the little Synagogues and the *Chevras*. Here Orthodox Judaism has still the advantage. Liberal Judaism will have to see to it that *its* Synagogues too should be free from the reproach of class. It will not be easy to achieve this end, but it must be kept in view.

So far as democracy is still inclined, or has become inclined, to desire or to champion a false and unreal equality, religion must fight it. Liberal Judaism, being *a* religion, must fight it too. For that one man is as good as another in *every* sense religion must deny. We may fitly believe that God cares for all, and that in His eyes there is no distinction of persons. In one sense, indeed, religion will be often *too* keen on equality for democratic prejudices or tastes. Democracy is urgent for equality of opportunity within the inhabitants of a single state, or within the limits of a single and

dominating race. But is the democratic Magyar always keen on equality for the Rumanian or the Ruthene? Or is the American white man keen on every sort of equality for the American negro? Do not stubborn facts suggest that, even within the British Empire itself, equality has many difficulties and problems? Religion may recognise these, and may admit that the pace must not and cannot be forced, but its *ideal* must still remain. In another sense, however, religion, as I have said, may deny equality just where democracy may wish to assert it. One man is not as good as another, whether in work or in saintliness. The saints form an aristocracy, whether democracy likes it or no. Only it is an aristocracy without titles or birth, without barriers or stations. And religion has to see to it that modern democrats shall not lose the exquisite human graces of humility and of reverence. From God to man, and from man to God: religion suggests both processes. Our reverence for God, our humility before Him, enable us the better to feel reverence and humility towards those who, among men, are wiser, better, holier than ourselves. But democracy is too often suspicious about both reverence and humility. Reverence has often been asked for the old, but the old, instead of being better and wiser, are often duller, more prejudiced, more hide-bound than the young. In the *mere* growth of years, as such, there is nothing for reverence. A faded rose is less glorious and less promising than a rosebud. Throw it away or bury it decently. And reverence for the old is not the worst. Too often reverence has meant a desired respect for those in power, for the rich, the employer, and the master. It has been inculcated from above, for the sake of those above and of their usurped

authority. It is the pseudo-virtue by which it has been attempted to make the poor content with their lot, and to keep them quiet, awe-struck and resigned, amid their squalor and degradation.

It is, then, religion which has to teach true reverence as distinct from false reverence, and true humility as distinct from false humility. For the best cannot be got out of man—the most beauty and sweetness out of human nature—unless he learns to admire, to reverence, and to adore. But *how* can he reverence and *what*? Only if he recognises the existence of a wisdom, a goodness, a love, which is greater and fairer than his own. He must recognise them among his fellows, but, more than that, he must believe in them as existing outside man altogether, as existing perfect and complete in the Eternal and the Divine. It is urgent that we should reverence the good in man, and specially in those who are better and worthier than ourselves, but it is very doubtful how far this reverence for man will continue, if it is not strengthened and vivified by a reverence for God. Unless we revere the source, shall we continue to revere the derivative?

It is, then, religion which must preserve, amid a democratic society, a true humility, a true dependence, a true sense of imperfection and inequality. In relation to Perfection we are as nought. "What are we? What our goodness? What our wisdom?" The old prayer spoke truly. We are equal in our common littleness before the Infinite. But my point also is that humility towards God can rob us of our foolish conceit towards our fellows, and that reverence before the perfect source of righteousness may better enable us to revere righteousness in man. And if the reverence of God helps us to reverence man,

so the reverence of others may help us to true self-reverence—that virtue which often enables people to keep straight and clean and keen in the midst of opportunities for dishonesty and impurity and slackness.

There is no reason that a democratic environment and democratic aspirations should not consort with, and approve of, admiration and reverence. There is no necessary connection of admiration and reverence with servility and adulation. On the contrary, so far as in us lies, it is natural for us to seek to imitate that which we admire, even though we recognise that a full copy is beyond our powers. It may be noted that admiration and reverence are independent of classes. In our present society, which many may regard as insufficiently democratised, Jones in Class A may admire and reverence Smith of Class B, whether A is a conventionally higher class than B or a lower. And, what is more, respect and respectfulness can proceed, not only from conventional lower to conventional higher, but *vice versa*. It is the man and the woman whom we respect, not their clothes.

Another point is, I think, worth making. We may rightly admire in men and women other things besides sheer intellect or even sheer goodness. We may admire charm and graciousness of manner, we may admire courtesy and exquisite manners; we may admire gentleness and beautiful breeding. But does not that seem to imply the recognition of classes and distinctions, such as democracy tends to dislike and to overthrow? Yes and no. It would be dull if we were all equal, and as a matter of fact we are not, and never shall be. We are not exactly equal even in such lesser virtues as those which I have just

mentioned. Some of us may possess some excellences, and some may possess others. Now might we not suppose a cart-horse, with full self-respect, yet admiring the thoroughbred? "Never mind," he might say, "for the moment how the beauty of that thoroughbred has come about. Perhaps it is only too true that it has partially come about by my ancestors having been overworked. But here as a fact it *is*. It stands before me. And so I have the courage to admire it." But here is the difference when the parable comes to be applied. The cart-horse, with all his courage, his insight, his modesty, that make him admire the thoroughbred, must remain a cart-horse still. But the *essentials* of those fair virtues that I named just now, courtesy, and gentleness, and exquisite manners, and beautiful breeding, are *not* the prerogatives of any class. They can be found in all classes. Moreover, they can be taught and fostered by right environment and right education. If democracy will greatly care for them, democracy can obtain them. But it can only obtain them if, as I say, it cares for them and honours them wherever it sees them, in rulers and in the ruled, in the high and in the low, in the rich and in the poor—I use present distinctions whether they are to continue or not. For admire and recognise courtesy, and you will yourself be courteous; honour and recognise modesty, and you will yourself be modest; love and recognise gentleness, and you will yourself be gentle. And how can you better retain and increase your *power* to admire, to honour and to love what is fair and beautiful among men than by the reverence and the love of God?

No form of Judaism, whether Orthodox or Liberal, is wedded to any particular theory of wealth and

distribution. But "Thou shalt not steal" still remains one of Ten Words honoured by both Liberal and Traditionalist. This Command, however, can be interpreted in more ways than one. The Socialist, for instance, has often declared that it is the Capitalist who is the thief. And, more generally, the contention of the fiercer democrats is that religion has interpreted the Command in the interests of the few rather than in the interests of the many, of the rich than of the poor. Religion has thought more of the property of those who have than of the emptiness of those who have not. It has, indeed, not entirely neglected the poor; but what has it offered and asked for them? It has sought for alms, for charity. But democracy seeks no alms. It does not want charity, it wants justice. It does not by any means agree with the confident and complacent saying, "The poor shall never cease out of the land." On the contrary. It intends that, in the sense of one man needing the alms of another, the poor *shall* cease out of the land. Judaism has identified *Zedakah* — righteousness and justice — with Almsgiving. Democracy would rive them asunder. The *schnorrer*, as a fixed institution, existing to give merit to those who helped him, is an entirely anti-democratic conception. The rich are not to exist for the sake of the poor, still less are the poor to exist for the sake of the rich. But men are to live the best human lives for their own sakes in equality and independence. They are to be ends, not means.

I do not see that Judaism has any reason to fear the truth which these contentions contain. Social justice is a pillar of the Jewish faith. The greatest creation of the Jewish religion is the series of the Jewish prophets. Or we might say, conversely,

that the Jewish prophets created Judaism. Liberal Judaism more especially is constantly harking back to their teaching. Now these prophets were as intensely keen on social justice as on pity and loving-kindness. Justice to Amos, the first, and not the least, of the band (so far as their writings have been preserved), is the very keystone of the social arch. The prophetic sympathy with the poor and the oppressed, their denunciations of the rich and the oppressor, are too well known to need illustration. It is inaccurate and anachronistic to call the prophets social reformers, tribunes of the people, socialists, but that they have been given such titles shows which way the wind blows.

Again, Judaism, as a religion, has always set before the worshipper a God who was no respecter of persons, and before whom all men are equal. All can approach Him : they need the mediation of no priest or intercessor. If this last statement was not wholly true before the fall of the Temple, it has at least been true, and became increasingly true, for the last 1800 years.

Then, too, the Jewish religion—whether rightly or wrongly is another matter—has not established any double system of morality. It knows no works of supererogation. What it asks from its believers, it asks from them all. And the ideal, even from Biblical times, is a democratic ideal,—a knowledge of God for all. "They shall *all* know me." "Would God that *all* the Lord's people were prophets, and that God would put His spirit within them *all*." And when the Jews lived among and to themselves, there was only one sort of aristocracy known to them, to which all might aspire. It was not an aristocracy of wealth, even though, from the

very nature of their sad history, wealth had for them special and peculiar advantages; it was an aristocracy of learning. The learned Rabbis were the Jewish Viscounts and Earls.

Among the virtues, which religion has often lauded and inculcated, are contentedness and resignation. Nor can either Orthodox Judaism or Liberal Judaism do without them. But here, too, democracy might seem to take up an opposing line. We are—so Judaism teaches—to thank God for the good, and even for the evil. Patient endurance, without cavil or grumbling, of our lot is supposed to be one of the virtues proclaimed and commended by religion. We must not worry; we must not fret. Rest in the Lord. Whereas the ideals of democracy seem very different. We *are* to worry, we *are* to be impatient, over the troubles both of others and of our own. We *are* to be discontented with the wretchedness and injustice of our lot. We are to be consumed with a burning passion of indignation. Discontent is to engender the demand for redress, for improvement. We are not to be satisfied either with our own poverty or with the poverty of our neighbours. We are to struggle against it, and not to rest. Our hope and aim are to be that, to ourselves and to others, there shall come change, advancement, increase of comfort, increase of knowledge, increase of well-being. Instead of pious satisfaction with our dull and restricted lot, we are to strive for better things, both for ourselves and for our children.

It is of the greatest importance that religion should come to terms with democracy upon this question. It must point out the limitations, while freely acknowledging the partial accuracy, of the

argument. We must, in the first place, carefully distinguish. To be contented with our own lot is one thing: to be contented with the lot of our neighbours is quite another. Democracy is very right in suspecting that second kind of contentment, especially when it takes the form of the rich being satisfied with the poverty of the poor, or the comfortable acquiescing cheerfully in the misery of the wretched.

We must not be content with evil. Only we must make up our minds, and clear our vision, as to what is *really* evil. Carking anxiety for the morrow's meal; the lack of any opportunity for wholesome recreation and simple joys; to see one's own child, or any child, inadequately fed, clothed, tended, taught; such things as these we may choose to estimate as true evils, and we may declare that to be resigned to them, and content with them, and grateful for them, is monstrous and perverse. But it does not follow that it is an evil to be an "assistant teacher," while my neighbour is a "head"; or that, if I am a bootmaker, it is an evil for my son to be the same. Nor does it follow that because it is requisite, say, for the avoidance of grinding care, and for the attainment of simple and wholesome well-being, to earn and possess x pounds a year, one is therefore happier with $4x$, and still happier with $16x$, and so on *ad infinitum*. True contentment depends partly upon a true doctrine of values. Nor, within certain limits, are even good and right values the same for every man, or need every man's ambition run along the same lines. We are not, then, to be content with wrong; and we are not even to judge too hastily about what another man should be content with. But what of ourselves? Are we to be

content with our lot and with the station in which we find ourselves? Ruskin said Yes, but he declared that while the maxim was, on the whole, a good one, it was peculiarly for home use. "That your neighbour should, or should not, remain content with *his* position is not your business; but it is very much your business to remain content with your own. What is chiefly needed in England at the present day is to show the quantity of pleasure that may be obtained by a consistent, well-administered competence, modest, confessed and laborious. We need examples of people who, leaving Heaven to decide whether they are to rise in the world, decide for themselves that they will be happy in it, and have resolved to seek — not greater wealth, but simpler pleasure; not higher fortune, but deeper felicity; making the first of possessions self-possession; and honouring themselves in the harmless pride and calm pursuits of peace."[1] And again he says: "In spite of all the cant which is continually talked by cruel, foolish or designing persons about the 'duty of remaining content in the position in which Providence has placed you,' there is a root of the very deepest and holiest truth in the saying, which gives to it such power as it still retains, even uttered by unkind and unwise lips, and received into doubtful and embittered hearts."[2] So far as it is a true saying, it is so because "the most helpful and sacred work which can, at present, be done for humanity is to teach people (chiefly by example, as all best teaching must be done) not how to 'better themselves,' but how to satisfy themselves." "And in order to teach men how to be satisfied, it is

[1] *Unto this Last*, Essay IV. § 83.
[2] *Time and Tide*, Letter II. § 5.

necessary fully to understand the art and joy of humble life,—this, at present, of all arts and sciences being the one most needing study. Humble life,—that is to say, proposing to itself no future exaltation, but only a sweet continuance ; not excluding the idea of foresight, but wholly of fore-sorrow, and taking no troublous thought for coming days ; so, also, not excluding the idea of providence, or provision, but wholly of accumulation ; the life of domestic affection and domestic peace, full of sensitiveness to all elements of costless and kind pleasure ; therefore chiefly to the loveliness of the natural world." [1]

There may be exaggeration in this. It is certainly not true that we ought to be always contented even with our own lot or with our own station. There have been many lots and stations with which no one should have been contented : there are also several such lots and stations to-day.[2] Nor does it follow that what is adequate for one man is rightly adequate for another, or that a striving to rise above one's "station" to another and a "higher" station is necessarily foolish or wrong. We are quick enough to applaud those who have achieved the rise successfully. Yet a religious teacher may justly criticise a method of life and of living which is ever *seeking* satisfaction to-morrow and never *finding* satisfaction to-day.

For just as democracy objects to jam to-morrow, but never jam to-day, so may a true doctor of life object to satisfaction to-morrow, but never satisfaction to-day. Whether you are to rise in your calling or not may depend partly on you and

[1] *Modern Painters*, vol. v. part ix. chapter xi. §§ 20-21.

[2] Cp. the splendid books of Mr. and Mrs. Hammond on the Village Labourer and the Town Labourer from 1760 to 1830.

partly on others, but if you strive for such a rise to-morrow, such striving is false, if it makes peace and happiness, if it makes joy in the doing, impossible to-day. And this inward peace, this self-possession, this joy in the doing, are all associated with, and strengthened by, religion. Joy in the doing : as your service, as your gift, as the realisation of your own being, as your tribute of love and thankfulness to humanity and to God. Then, too, *self*-possession ; inward peace. This form of content is twofold. First, as produced by our environment and occupation, and as conditioned by them. And this is truly a foremost problem of democracy ; that all labour should be able to produce joy, satisfaction, peace. But if it cannot, and so far as it cannot, and so far as the shocks of circumstance and fate interfere and injure, there comes in that other form of content, in which the soul reacts against the environment and rises above it, unconquered, triumphant, trustful, serene. Out of inadequacy and dulness and pain the mind and heart *make* the best of things : they manufacture good out of evil. Here, again, religion must be the ultimate source of this kind of content, of this type of resignation. And religion can give it to us in two forms. First, in the more Stoic form of high endurance : "I am the master of my fate, I am the captain of my soul" ; "Know that he who finds himself loses his misery." Secondly, in the more Jewish form of trust and faith : "Cast thy burden upon the Lord, and He will sustain thee" ; "Rest in the Lord and fret not" ; "There is naught upon earth that I desire beside Thee."

Religion alone, so it seems to me, can give us this final and satisfying peace.

Still more closely connected with religion, and

therefore with Judaism, must be the questions of duty and of authority. Religion must ever uphold the conception of duty, and yet the *word*, though not I think the *thing*, has for many extremer democrats an ugly sound—at least in its association with religion. For religion has been supposed (and with some truth) to preach too often of duty, and too seldom of rights. And what has this belauded word duty too often meant in the mouths of the teachers of religion? It has meant: obey your masters; be subservient to your rulers; be content with your position. It has meant, dutifully and uncomplainingly toil so that others may enjoy. It has meant, submit without question to degradation, to poverty, to ceaseless labour, to a miserable old age, to the absence of all that makes life happy, civilised, worth living; and then once a week go to your church, and thank God for your own miseries and for the privileges of others. Such has been the duty of religion: it cannot be the duty of democracy. If duty means but that, democracy will have none of it.

But surely there is no difficulty here of understanding and reconcilement. The word and conception are both much too noble for democracy to abandon. It has reacted with some pardonable exaggeration against false interpretations of duty; it has objected to men emphasising "duties" and disregarding oppressions. It has even asked, How can those do their "duty" who have not the basic modicum of material well-being? How can you, it asks, even speak of duty in the case of those who are in natural revolt against a society which wrongs them? But all this is no argument against, and no antagonism to, duty itself. It rather means: let society do its duty to the oppressed, and then the

oppressed will do their duty to society. If democracy rejects duty, on the one side, it appeals to duty and brings it back again, upon the other.

While, however, the conception of duty may be so rightly and properly explained as to be fully accepted by democracy, the case of authority may seem more difficult. Democracy, at any rate, has been hostile, if not to authority itself, yet to many actual authorities, to many false or wrong authorities, as it conceives them to be. It has opposed the authority of the rich over the poor, of the powerful over the weak, of the few over the many. So far as it still desires change, it is opposed to many existing governments and authorities. So long as democrats are in opposition, they are obviously hostile to the authority of the authorities. Democracy in power can be, as we know, more authoritative, and place greater restrictions upon liberty, than many other forms of government. Socialism would possibly be the least free form of government that the world has ever known. But, as things now are, the extremer democrat is opposed to authority, especially to that type of authority which seeks to govern from above, and by a right which does not spring from below. But it is just this form of authority which, in the past, has often been backed and supported by religion. Upon this false and unpopular authority religion has often cast its aegis and its halo. It has bidden people be obedient to their rulers and their kings, obedient and subservient. The Book of Proverbs, for instance, encourages submission to, and fear of, the constituted authority. A king is the Lord's anointed. Religion has devised a sort of hierarchy, from the authority of fallible and visible men to the authority of an infallible and invisible

God. It has entered, as I have said, into an understanding with the great ones of earth. In return for their support and acknowledgment it has buttered and buttressed them up in their greatness and their privileges. Moreover, religion itself is closely connected with authority. It has set up the authority of a God, whom it likes to call Lord and King, and if Judaism lacks the authority of a priesthood, it depends all the more upon the assumed authority of a book and of a code.

But can democracy recognise any authority which does not spring from itself? The people must be the sole source of authority. The authority of a supposed God must be rejected. There seems to be some sort of notion existing among cruder and fiercer democrats that the idea of a "personal" and "omnipotent" God is in itself antagonistic to, and inconsistent with, democracy. He and His authority must, therefore, be rejected. If a man's whole-hearted allegiance is given to democracy, he cannot tolerate a rival sovereign, and, moreover, a sovereign with inconsistent and antagonistic claims. A democrat can only render obedience to the will of the people. He cannot render obedience to, he cannot even recognise or admit, the will and the commands of an outside and autocratic ruler, even if He be affirmed (by sundry interested persons) to be "omnipotent" and divine. But if democracy cannot accept "God," it clearly cannot accept any religion of which God, in the plainest and most emphatic sense of the word, is the sheet anchor of its faith. The breach between Judaism and democracy would be complete.

This whole objection to the very idea of God appears to rest upon a grave religious misconception. It seems to create a false God, and then to throw

Him over. Unconsciously, it does what so many people love to do: erect a feeble ninepin of your antagonist's views and ideals, and then hurl the ninepin down with alacrity and rejoicing. It is easy to demolish a caricature or a will-o'-the-wisp.

But it is most important to be just and to be accurate. It is, I think, a false idea of God against which the democrats go forth to tilt, but for this false idea many representations of the divine are, at any rate, partially responsible.

Let us assume that one could imagine a human society entirely destitute of any religious conception whatever. Let us further imagine that, amid supernatural thunder and lightning, a Voice was heard to say, "I am an omnipotent Being. Indeed, I am the one and only intelligent and self-conscious Being in all the universe besides yourselves. And, as I said before, I am omnipotent. I am now going to throw down to you upon the earth a series of commands and prohibitions. If you act according to these commands and prohibitions, I will reward you, after your death, in another state of existence. If you transgress them, I will severely punish you. Farewell."

It would not be unreasonable that, except for purely hedonistic or prudential reasons, the commands and prohibitions of such a Being should be neglected. Even if among them were many quite excellent and unobjectionable injunctions, such as, "Be unselfish to one another," it might yet be justifiable to say, "We may happen to obey this or that particular order, but not *because* this unknown Being has told us to do so. His purely external authority we reject. We refuse to cringe to him; we refuse to obey him. As to his threats and bribes

we will venture to ignore them. Perhaps he is only a delusion after all. We will take the risk, and preserve our liberty, our independence, our manhood."

But such a conception of God, of His relations to man, and of man's relations to Him, is a sheer caricature. It is not the conception of Him which is taught either by modern Judaism or by modern Christianity. It is not the conception of Him which was taught by the Rabbis. It is not the conception of Him which was taught by the Prophets. It is a ninepin.

God is not supposed by religious believers to be thus unrelated to man, nor is man supposed to be thus unrelated to God. He is not the mere external omnipotent and arbitrary Being, who is supposed to have issued a number of haphazard ordinances with threats and bribes for their due performance. He is not worshipped because He is believed to be powerful : He is worshipped because He is believed to be good. Indeed, He is only believed to exist on the score of goodness and on the score of truth. He is believed to exist because we believers (whether rightly or wrongly, sagely or foolishly, is here not in question) cannot explain the fact of human goodness or human wisdom *without* Him ; or because we can account for human goodness and human wisdom most satisfactorily *with* Him. It is not power which we adore : it is righteousness ; it is not punishment which we fear, but it is holiness which we reverence ; it is not reward which we seek, but communion, but nearness. In spite of evil and sin we are still—shall we say bold enough, or foolish enough ?—to believe that the universe is less explicable without God than with Him. Such goodness and wisdom and love as

man has achieved and displayed we believe to be due to the divine existence, and to the divine will, and even to the divine aid.

There is, therefore, no question of servile obedience, but of willing, of free and of loving obedience. No democrat, however completely non-religious and atheistic he might be, would object to saying, "I am the free servant of Righteousness and Wisdom." He would allow that the righteousness and wisdom which he "serves" is not the mere creation of his own individual will and mind, but the creation, after much travail, of collective humanity or of humanity's most chosen spirits. We, too, should say the same, only when we say that we are the servants of righteousness and wisdom, we think of a righteousness or wisdom, which is self-conscious, perfect and divine. If righteousness and wisdom are the law of our human nature, the law whereby we reach man's highest, we also believe them to be the law of God's nature. The moral law is Law in a triple sense. It is the law of God's being; it is the law of our being; it is the law which, recognised by us as both without us and within us, we are called upon by ourselves and by God to adore and to obey. The moral Law was not thrown at us from without, as a number of casual and arbitrary ordinances, by an outside and omnipotent power; it was revealed to man's soul and mind by the conjunction of man's own highest effort with the aid and the illumination of God.

The non-religious democrat would allow that there is a true sense in which it may be said that the man who serves his passions and the caprice of the changing hour is a slave, whereas the man who serves righteousness is free. Precisely so do we urge

that he who serves God is free, for the servant of God is the servant of righteousness. And the lover of God is the lover of righteousness: he seeks it with eagerness, with passion, with delight. To the Theist righteousness is guaranteed by God; guaranteed as to its reality, guaranteed as to its ultimate effectiveness, guaranteed as to its value. God's love glorifies and consecrates ours. His perfection gives meaning to our imperfection. Worship and obedience are one, and the fullest obedience is the completest liberty. We adore the living law of righteousness and love which is both ours and not ours, both within us and beyond us. No hope of reward, no fear of punishment, tempt us or constrain, but in gladsome reverence and ardent love—such at least is the religious ideal—we worship and obey.

Where, then, is the externalism? Where the cringing? Where the fear? Where the obedience to mere arbitrary Omnipotence? I answer unhesitatingly: not in the soul of the believer, but in the heated and angry imagination of our opponents. These things are but vain chimeras; at best they are the immature gropings, or errors, or perversions of religion; not its flower, its essence, or its crown. It is to religion in its purity and growth for which we would ask the democrat's allegiance; not in its early stumblings or in the travesty of its foes.

It might be legitimate to add that in Liberal Judaism the unquestioned authority of the perfect code falls away. The mind and conscience of man are set free to interpret, to distinguish, to appraise. The obsolete is separated from the permanent, the lower from the higher, the ceremonial from the moral. Hence, as it seems to me, Liberal Judaism

is really *more* suited to the democrat than Traditional Judaism, which can allow no questions and no criticism, which sets up the Code in its totality as the ultimate and the unalterable authority.

There is one more religious teaching, common both to Liberal and to Orthodox Judaism, upon which democracy has looked with some suspicion and concern. It is the teaching respecting the relation of this world to a supposed second and other world beyond the grave. Perhaps the quarrel here is more with certain phases of Christianity than with Judaism, but yet Judaism too has laid immense stress upon the "*Olam ha-ba*"—the world to come,—and in its convinced faith in that world has found comfort and redress for the miseries and inequalities of this world. It has even taught that the Jews are destined to be unhappy *here* that they may be all the happier *there*. We may well endure, with passive fortitude and quiet resignation, temporal and temporary sorrows and oppressions, if we are to be compensated for them in eternity by everlasting prosperity and joy. But against this doctrine the extremer democrats turn with fierce dislike and suspicion. It seems to them all of a piece with the other teachings of subserviency. It seems to have been invented and concocted in the interests of wealth and persecution, in order to keep the poor quiet and contented, and to prevent them casting off their chains. Democracy refuses to be comforted with the promise of happiness to-morrow, but never happiness to-day. It knows for sure of no other world than this world. It is *this* world which it desires to be prosperous. It is the evils of *this* world against which it desires men to rise and fight. It is their *present* miseries and limitations which it bids men to strive against

and to overcome. It suspects a religion which puts men off and fobs them with the delusive prospect of a life beyond the grave.

It is, however, not difficult to reply to this objection. It hardly touches any sore spot in Jewish teaching. For Judaism (and its keen antagonists have not been slow to notice and emphasise this point), while laying stress upon the world to come, has yet continued to attach importance to *this* world. The Golden Age upon earth is as much one of its dogmas as the Golden Age beyond the grave. And if Orthodox Judaism, it is true, has rather expected this golden age to arrive suddenly by the interposition of God, the ideal itself is at least as important as the supposed means of its achievement. There is no reason why the ideal should not, as it were, be linked on to a different means—the means, namely, of gradual improvement wrought out by the hands of man. This, at any rate, is absolutely true: that Judaism has never considered the social organisations and relations of this life as insignificant: even though this life is the vestibule, we are, nevertheless, to make the vestibule as good and decent as we can. Men are to be happy in the vestibule as well as in the hall. To wipe the tears from off men's faces is a work for man as well as for God.

To sum up, it seems tolerably clear that in the case of many of these supposed quarrels of democracy with religion, the real hostility is based, not upon religion as such, but upon the attitude taken up, and the doctrine preached, by many religious teachers, and by many religious societies, in the past. As regards duty and property, for example, religion in itself is not committed to the cause of the rich against the poor, or to any particular form of social organisation.

If it could be shown that socialism was the best form of government, and that it would greatly add to human well-being and happiness if no individual possessed any private property of his own, I cannot for the life of me see why religion as such should be opposed to it. One can well understand and sympathise with the suspiciousness of the democrats. Too long were a large number of the churches, and of the highest persons in the churches, in alliance with the forces which make for the interests of the powerful and the few. But this unholy alliance must be put down to the fault of erring men and not of religion. It cannot be denied that there now is in the Christian churches and in the Jewish synagogues a large number of priests, clergymen, ministers, rabbis, who have a burning sympathy with the poor, the toilers, the many. I would even venture to say of several of these men that their prejudices are on the side of democracy, and that they often judge the well-to-do (I speak as one of them) too harshly. And the number of these "democratic" ministers of religion is growing decade by decade. Yet their faith in God and in the doctrines of their own particular creed shows no slackening. And it shows no slackening because religion and democracy need each other. And Jewish democrats need (for no other religion will serve their turn) the Jewish religion.

They need it to give a basis, and to supply a crown, to their own ideals. For, as I see things, it is religion which, in the long run, must give that basis, and supply that crown. Without religion those ideals will, in the long run, crumble away. The ideals include brotherhood and service and unselfishness, and the willingness to labour for a common and

social end. Many will not agree with me, but, for my part, I believe that in order that men may continue to care for and to honour justice and unselfishness and service, they must believe that these virtues are not merely the chance creations of an ephemeral planet: they must believe them to be superhuman, supermundane, cosmic and divine. They must bow down to them in adoration, not merely as the best and most suitable arrangements for their own human societies, but as rooted in a wider and more embracing reality, and as the expression of a more universal will. And I think too that they must believe them to be *guaranteed* by that reality and that will, so that, in some true sense, it may be said of all labour on their behalf and for their increase, "finis coronabit opus"—the end will crown and justify the work. Religion is needed to give to toiling man faith and hope; faith in the reality of his highest and purest ideals, hope in their ultimate realisation and success. For the democratic ideal includes, if I understand it aright, both spiritual and material ends. It wants justice and knowledge and beauty and social service and unselfishness, but besides these it wants for all men a certain modicum of outward comfort and prosperity. Only upon the basis of these "outward goods," as the old Greeks called them, can men possess and enjoy some of the goods of the spirit—knowledge, beauty, peace. How can a man enjoy peace who is in ever constant anxiety as to how he and his family shall obtain their next week's meals? Let us admit all this, and admit it freely. Nevertheless, there is, I believe, a danger of a religionless society and of religionless democrats forgetting the end in their anxiety for the means, or mistaking the second for the first. It is religion which has to put

and keep prosperity in its place. The fig and the vine are good servants, but they are bad masters. Let a man sit beneath his fig tree by all means, but the vital question is: What is he going to do with himself as he sits? Religion must see to it that the golden age be more than an age of gold, that in their very quest for the ideal men do not forget its highest and noblest constituents. It is not only despair which might prompt men to say, "Let us eat and drink for to-morrow we die." Prosperity, too, might lead them to say it; prosperity and the denial of God. Religion's appointed task is to be the guardian and champion of the human soul, the human spirit; and every creation of the soul must be dear to it. If that be true, an alliance between democracy and religion should tend to the effective maintenance and development of all that is best and greatest in the achievements of the human mind.

Religion alone can aid us to work both for others and for ourselves, both for the present and for the future, both for earth and for heaven. Religion alone can nerve us to constant and patient work, and yet give us, at each moment in the process, a sense of security, of completion, of attainment. Religion alone can help democracy to make us both rightly discontented and rightly satisfied, rightly striving and rightly restful. And religion alone, with its high hope, can give the due perspective to the present; and can hallow earth with heaven and man with God. Democracy need not be afraid of Judaism with its teaching about the vestibule and the hall. The vestibule, as we saw, is not to be neglected because of the hall. It is to be thought all the more of, and to be made all the better and the sweeter. Not only is "one hour of blissfulness of spirit in the world to

come better than the whole life of this world," but also "better than the whole life of the world to come is one hour of repentance and good deeds in this world." It is this paradox of reconcilement which the union of democracy and religion may achieve.

Thus, whether we look at the matter from the general or the particular point of view, there seems to be no reason why we should scruple or hesitate to make Liberal Judaism known to the "masses" of the Jewish community. There is no reason why these masses, be their habitation or their nationality what it may, be they Russians, Americans or Rumanians, should not become ardent Liberal Jews. There is, indeed, one limitation. Liberal Judaism is much more suited for emancipated Jews than for Jews who are subject to disabilities and persecution. Apart from this one limitation, Liberal Judaism may, and should, joyfully go forward. For, in the first place, religion and democracy should be allies: there should be no quarrel between them. Then, in the second place, religion for Jewish democrats must take the form of Judaism. And, in the third place, the kind or type of Judaism which, with the growth of knowledge, will become increasingly necessary, must be Reform or Liberal. Negatively, it can be shown that Liberal Judaism, when better understood, presents, at least to free citizens, no obstacles; positively, it can be maintained that it possesses qualifications, which, in the modern world, no other type of Judaism can possess. It alone can stand cross-examination by history and by criticism, and come forth unscathed, without equivocation and without surrender. Therefore to the future alliance of Liberal Judaism and democracy we may look forward with confidence and with hope.

VI

LIBERAL JUDAISM AND THE FUTURE

In the first four chapters of this book I have dealt very briefly with the relation of Liberal Judaism to certain creations and documents of bygone generations. What I want to do now is something much more doubtful and perilous. It is nothing less than to venture upon a peep into the future. How can any man dare to peer into futurity? The hypothetical nature of my remarks, their vague and fragmentary and uncertain character, are at least as obvious to myself as to any of my readers. Still, I think that there may be a certain utility in such a venture. It will, at any rate, indicate the goal towards which, as I believe, Liberal Jews are proceeding, or towards which, in my opinion, we ought to proceed.

Besides the venturesome uncertainty of my lucubrations, I realise their thorniness and delicacy. It is needful to tread lightly on many difficult places, to put rash hands into several hornets' nests: without metaphor, it is necessary to allude to a question which divides not merely Jew from Christian, but Jew from Jew, and not merely Jew from Jew, but Orthodox Jew from Orthodox Jew, and Liberal Jew from Liberal Jew. No reasonable

person wants to hurt or to be hurt, to sting or to be stung, more than he can avoid, and therefore it will be well to write with as much brevity and restraint as clearness and frankness may permit.

Let us, then, straightway ask: What are the chances of Liberal Judaism amid the competition of the religions? What is its strength? What, if any, are its weaknesses? Does it seem to be in keeping, if I may use such a phrase, with the movement of religious thought in the European and American world, so far as such a movement can be discerned? Is Liberal Judaism a mere survival—a survival that may live for many ages—but which merely represents a despairing, if unconsciously despairing, effort to rescue what cannot any more be rescued, and to preserve what can no longer be preserved? Is it a well-meaning, but hopeless, attempt to fit out for a modern life a religion whose roots—reaching far away into an alien past—can no longer give sap and sustenance to the branches and the leaves? Did Judaism, so far as any effective vitality and influence are concerned, indeed come to an end (as almost all non-Jews believe) some nineteen hundred years ago?

There is something very striking in the loneliness of Judaism through the ages in the Western world. There is something very grand in the defiance of this small band of protesting dissidents against a hostile and contemptuous environment. It is a story of a long trust in God and in the truth without a parallel in history. Suppose we compare the position of Judaism to-day with its position in Europe during the Middle Ages. It is lonely to-day; it is dissident; it still stands apart; but how much more lonely then than now! If it is venturesome to-day, how

much more venturesome then! If any of the thousands who gave their lives for Judaism from Constantine to Luther were to return to earth, might he not say that, while the day has not yet fully dawned, the night is breaking, and the worst is past? A thousand years ago the Jew, in his European environment, looked out upon a united, a believing and an orthodox Christianity. Who then doubted the dogmas of the persecuting and conquering Church? Only the despised and hated Jew. He alone. There was, indeed, another world religion besides the religion of the Church. There was Islam. But the Jew rejected Islam no less than he rejected Christianity. He ventured to stand outside both, and from both to reap derision and contempt. The dogmas of the Church, which all believed, seemed very firmly woven and very firmly fixed. And of these dogmas those most in evidence, those most cherished, those most lived by, and lived for, and beloved, were the very dogmas that were most antithetic to Judaism, against which Judaism, in its brave and lonely dissidence, protested most fiercely, and to the death denied. Not the humanity of the founder, but his unqualified divinity, filled men's minds; not his ethical teaching, not his simple love for God and for man, but subtle dogmas about his Godhead and about his bodily presence in bread and wine, strange conceptions about his virgin mother, the supposed mother of God, adoration of images, invocations of saints, infractions of monotheism in many forms and directions—these things occupied the religious consciousness, stimulated the religious actions, of the Christian world. They still exist; they have not perished. But, nevertheless, what an immense change between then and now. For one

who even secretly doubted the specific dogmas of Christianity then, are there not a hundred or a thousand now? Where is the stress laid to-day? The Church is divided against itself, and within the ranks of each division and sect are many who are its adherents only in name. Many educated persons no longer believe in the Virgin Birth, the Empty Tomb, a physical or semi-physical Resurrection, the doctrine of the Trinity or of Transubstantiation, the absolving power of a priesthood, the invocation of the "mother" of God. The crumbling process may take a long while, but it progresses, and another dozen centuries may make a vast difference yet. If our old martyr Jew of the tenth century were to rise and look around, he would readily perceive that he had not died in vain; "let me sleep again," he would say, "and return in another thousand years for another glance. For surely Thou changest not; a thousand years in Thy sight are but as yesterday when it is past and as a watch in the night. What matters the number of the years? I will lay me down and sleep. When I awake, I shall be satisfied."

So far the mediaeval Jew. But if the development of religious thought seems to be tending, slowly but surely, to the dissolution of Orthodox Christianity, is it tending any the more towards Judaism? What would the awakened mediaeval Jew have said had he looked within instead of without? What would he have said as to the conditions and prospects of Orthodox Judaism, and what would have been his agony had it been suggested to him that the future of his faith, if indeed it had a future at all, belonged, not to the old Judaism which he knew, believed in and loved, but to a new Judaism,

which he could only have regarded as a most terrible and atrocious heresy, wholly unworthy of the Jewish name? I fully admit that the brave old martyr would have sunk back to his sleep with very different feelings in his heart. Any smile of satisfaction would almost wholly have disappeared.

The present position and prospects of Liberal Judaism can be considered from a negative, and also from a positive, point of view. The negations of Liberal Judaism relative to Christianity are also affirmations. For example, Liberal Judaism does not merely deny the Orthodox Christian conception of God; it affirms a conception of its own.

How far is its attitude towards Christianity hopeful or hopeless?

It has been suggested that the dogmas of Orthodox Christianity show signs of wear and decrepitude. Some of them are abandoned by many educated persons; some are being so explained as almost to be explained away. In spite of the immense claims which are still made for Christianity as the absolute religion, or as the one universal religion, which is destined to cover the whole area of the globe, and to be adopted by all races and all colours of men, Liberal Judaism may be well content to stand firm and to wait. The process of disintegration may go much further. He who compares 900 with 1900 may have reasonably good hope and courage for the difference which is likely to prevail between 1900 and 2900. The attacks of science, philosophy and criticism upon the miraculous and historic elements of the Orthodox Christian faith may have periods of cessation and reaction, but they are likely to be renewed. What is left of Christianity in 2900 will perhaps bear much closer resemblance

to what we now know as Unitarianism than it will to any other now existing section of the Christian Church. The Jesus who is universally believed to have had a human father as well as a human mother, and whose resurrection was no more than the continued life after death of any other member of the human family, will hardly remain for many centuries the only begotten son, and himself the incarnation, of God. His deity will gradually resolve itself into that touch of divineness which every good man may be supposed to share. In view of the immense amount of faith which still exists in the "Divinity of Christ," such assertions may seem foolhardy and ridiculous. Never mind. Liberal Jews have no fear. Our faith in our own pure monotheism, which suffers the partnership of no man, and offers worship to no child of woman, is happy, confident and serene. We hold that this faith of ours will, at long last, be vindicated triumphantly. Nor do we think that even the *human* Jesus will be allowed by time to retain his lonely pinnacle of solitary perfection. Will criticism always affirm that all his recorded utterances are on an equal level of moral or religious excellence, or that the more excellent are all genuine, the less excellent incontestably spurious? Will men for all time endure the burden of a religion which forces them to accept as authoritative and immaculate the sayings of a single Jewish teacher, who necessarily shared, to some extent, in the moral and religious limitations of his age and his environment? Will *that* be always regarded as the perfect life of which we only doubtfully know a few incidents in a single year, while a large portion of what we do hear is shrouded in legend, uncertainty and mist? The freedom of Liberal Judaism towards any book, any

teacher, any record, as it gives its adherents happiness and serenity to-day, must surely win for them many more adherents in the future. Can it be that coming ages will bind us more closely to the correctness and the authenticity of a story, or to the moral and religious perfection of a number of ancient words? Emancipation from bondage, whether to a code, a story, a book, or a man, may be more probably regarded as the tendency of the future.

But even assuming that all this is so, and will be so, we must not too hastily assume that the disintegration of Orthodox Christianity means the ever firmer and more world-wide establishment of Liberal Judaism. If there exist dissolvents for Christianity, will not these very forces be dissolvents for Liberal Judaism as well?

But the essence of my bold contention is that, while Orthodox Judaism may not be able to resist these forces, Liberal Judaism is in very different case. Orthodox Judaism depends upon a particular interpretation of a book and a code—an interpretation which is more open and exposed to the heavy guns of criticism than even a tolerably orthodox interpretation of the New Testament Scriptures. As regards *his own* religion our old resurrected Jewish martyr would suffer almost as much as he would triumph. The doctrine of the divine man has received many a blow; but the doctrine of the homogeneous, perfect and divine Code has been so severely attacked that few serious attempts are now made in its defence.

Yet if Liberal Judaism is impervious to the onslaughts of criticism, if it can dispense with miracles and perfect codes and perfect teachers and divine men, has it not other heritages of the past,—weaknesses of omission as well as of commission, thin-

ness and inadequacy of substance as well as positive troubles both in doctrine and in form—which must make its chances of life and of development exceedingly poor and small?

How absurd it would be to suppose that a great religion like Christianity, which has produced so many saints and heroes, and so many great teachers and philosophers, a religion which has satisfied so many millions of different minds, sustained them in sorrow and nerved them to endurance and to sacrifice, should not contain a large element of permanent truth. Nor would it be wise to assume too hastily that what is good and permanent and helpful and true in Christianity is only that part of its doctrine which it shares with Judaism. Many dogmas of the Church may crumble away, but there will be teachings, there will be ideals, which, in one form or another, will remain. And as I ventured to assert in a previous chapter, the figure of Jesus himself is scarcely destined to be forgotten or treasured no more; nor is cultivated society likely to abandon the Gospels to cling the closer to the Law, to forgo the Apostle to the Gentiles, but to hold in all the higher esteem the authors of Judges and of Esther. If the time should come when Liberal Judaism is to take its place as a universal religion, as the faith of many races rather than the faith of a portion of a single race, it will have to be less purely negative and repellent than it now is to the New Testament and to its central hero.

But this is not all. It is not only a question of an attitude towards a book and a teacher, it is also a question of an attitude towards certain particular doctrines: it is also a question of how far the doctrine of Liberal Judaism is capable of defence, upon the one hand, of expansion, upon the other.

First, then, as to expansion, where matters have again to be touched upon to which vague allusion was made before. Christian dogma seems to be one thing; Christian theology another. The mighty product of thought which is incorporated in the theology; the endless travail of splendid brains, the religious experience which has suggested the thinking, and the thinking which has been tested and illumined by the experience—all this has not ended, and will not end, in sand. The dogmas of the Trinity, the Incarnation, the Atonement, may all pass away, and may cease to be believed. But surely they will leave *something* behind. Are we to suppose that the entire conception of God and of His relation to man has been only injured and corrupted, and in no way enlarged or enriched, by the whole course and process of Christian theology? Can we believe that it is *all* loss and no gain? That as men believed about God in Judaea in 10 B.C., so, and in no way otherwise, would the wisest and the best of them do well to believe in A.D. 2000?

Somehow or other, such a belief seems to me to be not only amazingly silly, but to savour of something between atheism and blasphemy. All the great thinkers of Christianity and all its beautiful souls must surely have contributed *something* to the fuller knowledge of God. A living faith appears to demand a belief of this kind. There is something behind a dogma in which great souls have believed and found nutriment, which big brains have fashioned and toiled at. Jesus was, let us assume, a very good and a very great man, but not a perfect man, and not without limitations, both intellectual and religious; yet the doctrine of the Divinity of Christ, though literally false, may, nevertheless, con-

tain elements of truth and of value. And so too with the Trinity, and with other Christian dogmas. Literally, they may be false and transitory, but they will not pass away without leaving fructifying seeds for the purer and truer conception of God and of man that is to follow them.

The old parrot cry about Judaism knowing nothing of a God of mercy has almost ceased to croak. The Old Testament God of justice, the New Testament God of love, is a false antithesis. The unbeliever and the child of darkness who fall into the hands of the God of the New Testament in general, and of the Fourth Gospel in particular, will by no means have a pleasant time of it. In relation to the unbeliever the God of the Fourth Gospel is, according to Liberal Jewish ideas, neither loving nor just. Nor have we to go to the New Testament or to Christian theology for information or inspiration about the conception of God as a Father. In our own documents and in our own theology, and on our own lines of development, that particular aspect and conception of God are amply provided for. As to the loving-kindness and compassion of God we have little to learn. It is not here that the expansion seems called for or required.

In a previous chapter I mentioned the doctrine of the divine Immanence. Here is one direction in which advance has probably to be made. Judaism must always maintain the separateness of God and man. But the nature and the implications of the relation between the two have not yet adequately been thought out. The doctrine of the divine image can be more fully developed. Again, there is no feature of the Orthodox Christian faith which has been more repellent to the Jewish mind, from the

age of Paul till now, than the idea of God, in human form, suffering and dying upon the cross. To the Jew, God is always the same and always perfect. Occasionally He seems, perhaps, to resemble a little too closely the God of Aristotle in His majestic self-sufficiency, in His eternal and immutable beatitude. We may well believe that this aspect of the Divine Being represents a truth, and can never be entirely abandoned. It was necessary, at a certain stage of development, to enunciate the doctrine that goodness and wickedness are not rewarded or punished by God because the one benefits, and the other injures, Him. He does not rule the world of man for His own profit and advantage. There is, therefore, a real, if relative and limited, truth in the statement of Eliphaz (Job xxii. 2, 3) :

> Can a man bring profit to God ?
> Nay, the wise man but profits himself.
> Does Almighty God care for thy righteousness ?
> Has He gain from thy blameless ways ?

Or, again, when Elihu declares (Job xxxv. 7, 8) :

> What effect has thy sin upon God ?
> What cares He for thy many transgressions ?
> What gain comes to Him from thy righteousness ?
> What receives He from thy hand ?
> It is to men like thyself thy sin matters,
> It is mortals thy righteousness touches.

Professor J. E. M'Fadyen (whose capital translation I have borrowed) says of this second quotation : "One hardly knows whether to abhor more this utilitarian conception of religion or this heartless conception of God." And of the words of Eliphaz he says : "There is something peculiarly repellent about this position of Eliphaz, whether we consider its commercial view of religion or its loveless concep-

tion of God."[1] I do not think that either Eliphaz or Elihu deserves this very severe condemnation. It was not illegitimate to point out that God primarily desires human righteousness for man's sake, not for His own sake: that man's virtues affect man, and that man's sins injure man. If God rewards the one and punishes the other, He does not do so for any benefit or injury which *He* has sustained, but because man deserves what he receives, and is benefited by receiving it. It was necessary to establish the divine independence and self-sufficiency before one could safely go on to find a certain mystical or ontological sense in which it might be supposed that the fortunes, or the moral condition, of man affect God. Yet if God pities human sorrow, if He feels compassion for human suffering, is not this very pity or compassion a breaking in upon, and a limitation of, the divine beatitude? Is not pity akin to sorrow, and is not sorrow akin to suffering? A further step is sympathy. Must not God be sympathetic with the woes of the universe? Surely, He must. But is not sympathy more akin to suffering even than pity? In a former chapter I mentioned how the Rabbis make free use of this conception of the divine sympathy. They base their thought upon that strange verse in Isaiah (lxiii. 9) (of which the text is probably corrupt): "In all their afflictions He was afflicted." The Shechinah suffers with the sufferings of Israel. Yet even this conception does not go to the full length to which the doctrine of divine suffering is often stretched to-day. When Dr. Carpenter says that, according to his belief, "the long passion of our humanity is borne in all its multitudinous variety" by God, that "He is the companion, if He is also

[1] *The Problem of Pain: a Study in the Book of Job* (1917), pp. 157, 263.

(in part at least) the author, of our woe," he means something more than sympathy.[1] He means, I take it, that in the great cosmic process or drama the Divine Being or Spirit suffers of necessity in its difficult evolution. He brings His plans to the birth in pain. He is bound to succeed, but He can only succeed at a cost and a struggle, in which He is Himself involved, and through a universal suffering in which He is bound to share. He grieves for, but He also suffers with, and suffers in, the sorrows and the sufferings of man and of the world. Such conceptions raise many difficulties. But if there be any truth in them at all, if God is not, as it were, static in a lonely and isolated perfection, but Himself moves forward with, and amid, His creation to a more perfect good, may we not, perhaps, have here, in this huge idea, thus roughly, briefly and clumsily expressed, the germs of a grander theodicy —the germs of some finer transfiguration and explanation of suffering than Jewish thought has yet devised?

May it be too that this idea may also provide some explanation for the awful mystery of the sufferings of animals. And, parenthetically, it may be remarked that practical Jewish idealism has been ever very sensitive to these sufferings, while Christianity has, for long, been careless and indifferent. I do not believe that if Europe had become Jewish instead of Christian, England, for instance, would have waited till the nineteenth century for any legislation to be passed, or for any Society to be formed, to suppress cruelty to animals, or that hundreds of years after the land had become Jewish, on a man being charged with horrible cruelty to a cow, the case would

[1] *The Place of Immortality in Religious Belief*, p. 93 (1898).

have been dismissed because the cow was only an implement of the farm and the property of the man.

But if the Divine Being Himself in some mysterious manner shares in the world's travail and sufferings, then, for all those who partake of the divine gift of reason and consciousness, suffering is strangely glorified and sublimated. In some newer and higher sense we become partners with God; in some newer and higher sense, as we wage war with evil, so are we fighting shoulder to shoulder with Him.

Nor is this all. For closely allied to the doctrine of suffering is the doctrine of sacrifice. For why should God suffer? Not because of His sin, for He is sinless. But what if He suffers, because He is strangely bound up with, even though He be above and beyond, the worlds which He informs and sustains? What if He suffers, because they, in their imperfection, must suffer? What if He suffers with them, and for their sakes? What if He suffers because He loves them, what if He suffers in order to redeem?

These reflections may appear presumptuous, yet they seem to be partially involved in those ancient words, not of the prophet, but of his copyist or editor: "In all their afflictions He was afflicted." And so we come near to the idea of sacrifice, to the idea of the eternal sacrifice of God for the sake of His creation. In their affliction He is afflicted; of necessity, but also voluntarily; afflicted, in order to redeem and to save. There may conceivably be a transcendental sense in which the old Christian interpretation of the most famous chapter of Hebrew prophecy may enshrine a difficult, but profound, truth: "He is wounded for our transgressions."

Even ethically this great chapter has been, I

believe, inadequately used and developed in the history of Jewish thought. We have not realised with sufficient fulness and clarity the meaning and implications of the idea and the doctrine of self-sacrifice. We have not realised enough how it changes and illumines the conceptions of retribution and of punishment, how it connects itself with, and transfigures, the whole story of human effort and human suffering and human love. "The highest life," said the great teacher who, when she wrote the words, had long ceased to be a Christian, "is a conscious voluntary sacrifice." But there can be little doubt that the idea of self-sacrifice, of bearing one another's burdens, of vicarious suffering, consciously, even voluntarily, undergone, and realised as the law of life, which is both inevitable and redemptive, is a contribution to human ethics of a distinctly Christian stamp. It bears a Christian superscription, and issues from the Christian mint. It is closely connected with, and indeed rests upon, that idea of the divine suffering and the divine sacrifice, which I have ventured just to touch on with some hesitation and uncertainty. But it seems to me that here, at any rate, are conceptions of Christian origin, which Liberal Jewish theology, if Liberal Judaism is to become a more universal religion, must deeply consider, and may possibly, in some shape or form, think well to adapt and to adopt.

So much here (by way of mere illustration) about expansion. But there is also a word to say as to defence. The attack, alike from Orthodox Jewish and from non-Jewish quarters, upon Liberal Judaism would be to argue that its doctrines have been so contracted or so "purified" (whichever way you like to look at it) that, except in one single instance, they

only amount to a pale and unsubstantial Theism, while that one single, specifically Jewish, doctrine is inadmissible by, and unacceptable to, any who are not born within the Jewish pale. I have often replied to the first part of this attack before, and I will deal with it now but very briefly. The truth is that this attack is usually put forward by people, who are, perhaps, learned in Jewish law, but ignorant and neglectful of Jewish theology. They seem to think that the one salient doctrine in the whole Jewish religion is the Unity of God, so that only the ceremonial law differentiates the Jew from any other person who says that he disbelieves in the divinity of Christ, and accepts the theory of the divine Unity. Or, again, they seem to think that faith in God is something small and pilulous, and that what gives size and substance to religion is dietary laws and minutiae of Sabbatical observance. But in both respects they are wrong. To make faith in God central and supreme in human existence is both Jewish, on the one hand, and religiously substantial, upon the other: it is neither flimsy nor small. "Mere Theism" people say! But what an adjective for what a noun! Somehow one feels almost inclined to reply that only those can speak of mere Theism to whom the vast realities of faith in God have somewhat receded behind a certain pride of race and the observance of a number of ceremonial injunctions. But they are wrong in their criticism from another reason as well. The Unity of God is *not* the end-all and be-all of Jewish theology. You are not a Jew merely by saying that you believe in the divine Unity. Judaism goes beyond so bare and even barren a statement. What *sort* of God is this deity whom you declare to be One? What is His char-

acter? What is His relation to the world and to man? What can and should be man's relation to Him? What is His relation to good and to evil, and how are these conceptions affected by a faith in His existence? What is the relation of men to one another, and how does our duty to God affect our duty to our neighbour? All this and more is included in "mere Theism," and to all these large questions Judaism, like any other Theistic religion, must have, and has, its specific answers to give. It is all of them together which go to constitute the Jewish religion. The Jewish answers to all these questions have their specifically Jewish colour. Connected one with the other, and forming a substantial and consistent whole (however capable of further development), they make up a theology which should be adequate for the men of many races and not merely for the men of one.

And now as to the alleged one and only specifically Jewish doctrine within the compass of Liberal Judaism which is inadmissible by, and unacceptable to, the outer world. That doctrine is the Mission of Israel. But why can this doctrine not be more generally believed in? I admit that no Christian can accept it. To him the mission of Israel closed with the birth of Christianity. But for those who have rejected the Orthodox Christian doctrines, and who yet believe in the conception of God in history, why is it impossible to believe that Judaism may still have work to do, and a place to fill, in the religious development of the world? If its doctrine of God is essentially true and capable of enlargement, why may not this religion, even though now confined to a few, be destined in the future to a wider influence and a larger sphere? Let us first be true to ourselves, and true to truth

where we discern it, and the wider influence may at long last be ours—not ours for us to see, but ours because we shall have helped our spiritual descendants and successors to see it. Let us think greatly of Judaism ; let us, by our fidelity and effort, help it to develop and to expand, and there seems to me no inherent reason, within it or without it, why a place upon the large theatre of human progress should not yet be in store for it, why a big part should not, in God's own time, be reserved for it to play. When I am told that nobody believes in our mission except ourselves, the fact does not disturb me, if I can find in that faith of ours nothing that is itself unreasonable or absurd.

As regards its doctrine, Liberal Judaism would, as I have said, be criticised by the outer world because of its continued and insistent belief in the mission of Israel. But this touch of particularism, as outsiders call it, while *we* deny the accuracy of the nomenclature, is not the only reason why its prospects in the future are considered small and feeble. There is another criticism—also connected with the question of particularism—which we have now to investigate. And here, for opposite reasons, Jewish and non-Jewish critics join hands. Over and above the dogma of the mission of Israel, and apart from it, Liberal Judaism is said by one set of critics to be too particularistic, by another set to be not particularistic enough.

The non-Jewish critics speak of it, in other words, as if it were still a national religion, and as such to be ignored ; the Jewish critics declare that it seeks to eliminate and overlook the fact and the glory of nationalism, and is therefore doomed to sterility and extinction. To the first set of critics, Liberal Judaism

is doomed because it is, and must be, a national religion ; to the other set it is doomed, because it has successfully evicted the national element.

In what respects (apart from the dogma of the Mission of Israel) is Liberal Judaism held to be of necessity a national religion? I suppose the answer is twofold. First, its embodiment is national ; secondly, its members belong, and must continue to belong, to one race and one race only.

Let us examine these two contentions in order. The first can be disposed of very briefly. It is exceedingly curious, but true, that the majority of the Jewish holy days are singularly universal in their character. The harvest and thanksgiving festival of Tabernacles, the purely human and catholic institutions of the Day of Memorial and the Day of Atonement, can appeal to everybody. Pentecost, as the festival of Law, has also a purely human significance. The Passover is more difficult to universalise, but as the festival of Liberty it, too, strikes a broadly human note. It is hardly necessary to remark that the weekly day of rest, be it observed on Saturday or Sunday, is in every respect non-national and universal. Hence the charge that the outward embodiment of Liberal Judaism (apart from its dogma) is, and must be, national in character, seems to me to break down. It will not hold water. And, as a matter of fact, proselytes to Judaism find no difficulty in accepting the Jewish holy days and in observing them. The word, together with the conception, of Israel, which will always retain its place in a Jewish liturgy, can and does easily lose its narrow, physiological, genealogical, national connotation. It can, and, please God, it will, gradually assume, more and more completely, a purely religious significance. Israel will

mean all those, be their race or ancestry what it may, who accept the Jewish faith and Jewish obligations.

But the second part of the answer is much the more serious and vital, namely the allegation that Liberal Judaism must always continue to be a puny sect, the members of which can only be recruited from a single race. And we must all agree that the day, or, at any rate, the religious value, of national religions is past for good and all.

In one sense even orthodox and even nationalistic Jews are agreed that the day of national religions is over. A curious theory has been invented by Orthodox Judaism in modern times in this regard. Orthodox Judaism frankly declares and admits that, while the dogmas of Judaism are universalist, its institutions and laws and embodiment are national. Its God is the God of the whole earth and of all human races, but its cult and worship are intended for the members of a single race. Hence Orthodox Judaism has no desire whatever for proselytes in the sense in which that word is usually understood, that is to say, persons who accept, not only the doctrines, but also the institutions and practices, of a particular religion. So far as I understand the theory, Orthodox Judaism is anxious (though it does not itself take action in order to realise its aspirations) that all the world shall accept the Jewish doctrine of the One God. But having accepted it, and in the measure that they accept it, the world's inhabitants must, so far as worship and religious institutions go, shift for themselves. Orthodox Judaism has nothing to offer them or to share with them. It leaves them severely in the cold. As to what the worship and the religious institutions of the millions who abandon Christianity, and accept the *doctrines* of Judaism, are

to be, Orthodox Judaism says no word. It appears to be indifferent on the subject. It is true that the Gentiles have this one advantage: they are not to be subjected to the burdens of the Ceremonial Law. But the Orthodox Jew tells us that these supposed burdens are no burdens. They are a delight and a glory. They are the vehicle of the purest religious satisfaction. They bring those who practise them near unto God. Nevertheless, the great and overwhelming mass of the human race are to be deprived for ever of these delights and satisfactions. They are never to perform those practices which bring men near unto God. How *they* are to draw near, what *their* religious vehicles and instruments are to be—so long as these are, I suppose, wholly disconnected from any semblance or taint of Christianity—it is for them to discover for themselves. The perfect Law is for the Jews alone. In other words, they occupy a special and chosen place. They enter and possess the sanctuary. They enjoy privileges. They have the rights of the first-born. They are the priests; outside is a huge second class of neglected laymen. In truth, Orthodox Judaism cannot get rid of a certain measure of particularism. Drive out its particularism by the door of doctrine, it re-enters by the door of observance.

A religion which frankly admits that only its doctrines, and indeed only some of its doctrines, are to become gradually universal is in a very difficult position. I say, "indeed only some of its doctrines," for the dogma of the perfect, divine and Mosaic law not even the most ardent Orthodox Jew can suppose will ever be accepted by those who are outside the Jewish pale. When Orthodox Jews speak of the spread of Jewish doctrine, they usually mean little

more than the diffusion of a belief in the Unity of God.

Liberal Judaism, on the other hand, aspires to give its all. There are to be no reserves or exclusions. When it prays for the diffusion of Judaism, it does not merely mean that more and more people are to acknowledge the abstract dogma of one God, but it means that they are free to accept the entire Liberal Jewish teaching as regards that God and His relation to us and our relation to Him, and that those institutions and worship by which *we* publicly and privately draw near to God may also be *theirs*. We seek, then, to give our all; we hold back nothing. We do not say: "here are the doctrines; we keep our forms and our worship to ourselves." We would throw the doors wide open, so that when Liberal Judaism has gradually conquered the Jews, it may slowly begin to draw in the world.

Our hope and aspiration may be daring, but they are definite. We know that our progress must be very slow. We realise that our religion must develop and expand, and that in certain respects it must be modified and enriched, before it can become, in very truth, a universal religion, of which the adherents will be drawn from many races and not only from one. We realise, moreover, that it is still more necessary, at first, to carry the men of our own race with us, and draw them after us, than to attract the men who are without. We must constantly preserve our communications, and keep in touch with our rear: we must maintain our connection with the historic past. It is *Judaism* which we have to universalise, and whose limits we have to push forward: an historic religion, which must not lose the justification and propriety of its ancient name. The goal is very

distant; but that it is either absurd, on the one hand, or ignoble, on the other, we deny. We admit that the venture is great. Only fools must be unable to see the force of the objection that even Liberal Judaism is merely the belated outgrowth of an anachronism, and that the Western World will never retrace its steps. We are well aware that the Liberal Judaism of the distant future will, in many ways, be very different from the Liberal Judaism of to-day. Be it so. Even though different, it will yet be an historic development. Judged by old and orthodox standards, Unitarianism is less Christian than Liberal Judaism is Jewish: nevertheless, the future of Christianity may be reserved for some form or phase of Unitarianism, which itself may ultimately coalesce with the Liberal Judaism of the future. We need not attempt to prophesy too closely; yet we keep our prophetic goal in our hearts and in our minds.

It is thus that we meet the attack from our non-Jewish critics; but what of the attacks from within the Jewish pale?

Are the Jews a people like any other people? Are they a nation like any other nation? And if so, what is the result of such a fact, if it be a fact, upon the conception and destiny of Liberal Judaism. We, however, deny that it is a fact. Israel was once a nation; it is now a church. And a church is greater than any nation: it transcends the nation, binding nation and nation together. That is why, in our Liberal Jewish opinion, it is so futile and false to compare the Jewish community with the Serbians or the Greeks. *They* are *just* a people; *we* are not.

Our religion, it is true, is at present largely regarded as a *national* religion. But we hope that it will not always be so regarded. We hope that the

synagogue — the Liberal Jewish synagogue of the future—will, in the most literal sense, be a "house of prayer for many peoples." When we use the term "Israel," we do not think of those who are connected together by race; we think of those who are connected together by religion. Whom do we regard as nearer to us—a proselyte, or an atheist who is a "Jew by race"? There can be no question about the answer. The proselyte—twenty thousand times! "Yet will I gather others to him besides those that are gathered." For the fulfilment of that prediction—however little we may talk of it, and people often do not talk of the deepest and most cherished elements in their faith—we would labour and have faith. It is not a national religion, professed by a petty people in Palestine, which can help to fulfil that prophecy; a national religion, professed by a small people in a distant home, can only retard it. Jewish communities scattered all over the civilised world, one with their fellow-countrymen in all national affairs and aspirations, keen on their Liberal Judaism as it grows in purity and universalism—*these* may help to realise it; to *their* open houses of prayer the peoples may yet resort. From Zion in the literal sense no law to the nations will go forth; but the many scattered Jerusalems of the synagogue may yet be destined to preach to numerous listeners the "Word of the Lord." For the days of local and national religions are over.

Such religions Liberal Judaism agrees with every kind and type of Christianity in regarding as venerable anachronisms; as transcended phases of religious development. Even if a people were to say: "My doctrines are for the world, but my worship and religious institutions are national," such a make-

shift at universalism, such a cross between universalism and nationalism, could hardly become of influence. Indeed Liberal Judaism goes further, and it would say, as I imagine all Europeans and Americans of every variety of religion would say likewise : nation and religion had better not, and should not, be conterminous. Religion should be wider than nationality : men of many nations should be of one and the same religion. A state is one thing ; a church is another. Men of one state need not all be of one religion : men of one religion need not all be of one state. A religion needs no petty principality, no earthly and local centre. A Judaism which requires a material capital is as mediaeval as a Catholicism which requires the restitution of the temporal power.

It was noteworthy and pleasing that at the Central Conference of American Rabbis, held in 1917, a Committee of 23 Rabbis passed, by a majority of 21 to 2, the following statement :

"We herewith reaffirm the fundamental principle of Reform Judaism that the essence of Israel as a priest-people consists in its religious consciousness, and in the sense of consecration to God and service in the world, and not in any political or racial national consciousness. And, therefore, we look with disfavour upon the new doctrine of political Jewish nationalism, which finds the criterion of Jewish loyalty in anything other than loyalty to Israel's God and Israel's religious mission."

If an outsider and Englishman may judge, it was a great pity that, for this clear and excellent statement, a feeble and flabby "substitute resolution" was adopted at the Conference in order to placate the nationalist minority. By this resolution the

Conference merely reaffirmed "its traditional position that the essence of Israel as a priest-people consists in its religious consciousness and in the sense of consecration to God and His service to the world. And that, therefore, we must and do look with disfavour upon any and every unreligious and anti-religious interpretation of Judaism and of Israel's mission in the world."

The most learned of all the Liberal Rabbis of America and probably of the world, Dr. Emil Hirsch of Chicago, in frequent articles published in his journal, *The Reform Advocate*, strikes no uncertain note. "Our Judaism," he says, "is broader than either new Nationalism or old orthodox Messianism." Yet, in the construing of Israel's history and fate as under Providential ordering, both the Orthodox who pray for the rebuilding of the temple and the re-establishment of the sacrifices, and "we who read our past in terms of a world-wide duty and obligation," are of "one sustaining consciousness." "To claim that modern Nationalism, which, to put it mildly, is indifferent to religion, is the heir of old Jewish Zionism is arrogant *camouflage*."

It might be supposed that there is some inconsistency in my apparently attacking Jewish nationalism both because it is too entangled with religion, on the one hand, and because it is not exclusively religious enough, upon the other. But the inconsistency is only apparent. The trouble is with Jewish nationalism, and not with me, its Liberal Jewish critic and adversary.

If Jewish nationalism attempts to free itself from religion, in other words, from Judaism, entirely,—that is Scylla. If it connects itself with religion, that is Charybdis.

The explanation of the riddle—if it be not already obvious—is as follows:

It would be best in accordance with modern and enlightened views as to what constitutes a nation if Jewish nationalists were to purge Jewish nationalism from every trace and particle of religion. And this is what a large and very important section of them actually desires to do. They are Jewish secularists. They do not want to have anything to do with religion, which no longer interests them. They would, therefore, I imagine, have no difficulty in granting that for full Jewish citizenship in a Jewish state there should be no religious tests whatever. A Jewish "national" might be of all religions or of none. If he professes the Jewish religion, and then becomes a Christian, he would none the less remain a full Jewish "national," and would no more lose any fragment of his national rights than an English Christian who became a Jew (by religion), or a French Jew (by religion) who became a Christian, would lose a fragment of his. A Christian Dane could become a Jewish "national" precisely in the same purely secular manner as he could become an Englishman. His Christianity would have nothing to do with the matter of naturalisation one way or the other.

From one important point of view all that would be most satisfactory. It would entirely get rid of any suspicion of religious disabilities. It would entirely get rid of the appalling fear that what the Jews have fought and declaimed against, when it suited their own interests and affected *themselves*, was going to be set up by themselves (because it would then only affect *others*) in Palestine. It would wholly get rid of the terrible suspicion that what the Jews have claimed to be the right and proud speci-

ality of modern citizenship—the total absence of religious tests—was to be neglected and ignored by them, directly they got the chance, in a state of their own.

So far, then, so good. But at what a cost has this result been achieved. Or shall I say: only at what a cost *can* this result be achieved? It can only be achieved by definitely dissociating the word "Jewish" with the word "religion": by definitely dissociating the Jews with Judaism. A section of Jewish nationalists may, indeed, honestly seek to free the new Jewish nationalism from any taint or trace of religious tests or religious exclusiveness. But they can only do so, because they are frank secularists, who desire to have nothing to do with (for they no longer believe in) the old religious Mission of Israel. Jewish nationalism is, indeed, purged of religious tests and religious disabilities: but the purgation involves the sacrifice and disappearance of Judaism.

May not this result be justly called Scylla?

Is not this kind of Jewish nationalism justly to be considered as *not religious enough*?

But if Jewish nationalists desire to retain some measure of religion and of Judaism, then the odious monster of religious tests again rears up her hoary and antiquated head. Then a Jewish "national," who formally abandons the Jewish religion, would *ipso facto* cease to be a Jewish national any longer, and a French Christian who sought to obtain naturalisation could only do so if he became a Jew by religion as well as a Jew by nationality.

May not this result be justly called Charybdis?

Would not this kind of Jewish nationalism be justly considered as too entangled with religion?

The truth is the conception "Jew" is so inextricably mixed up with religion that it is extremely difficult to free it from any religious connotation. And the argument shows that there can be no compromise. There can be no *via media*. There can be no half-way house. Either the Jews must be a religious community,—if you like to use the words in a non-natural sense, a priest-people—and that only. Or they must be a nation, the men and women of which (like the men and women of every other modern nation) may belong to all religions or to none.

Attempt a combination; declare that the Jews constitute a peculiar nation, one of whose distinguishing marks is the possession of a particular religion, and you fall into hopeless difficulties and dangers. And seek to set up such a nation in a land of its own, and you revive a perilous anachronism. No longer can you claim freedom for the Jews outside their own land. For the wit of man cannot devise a scheme under which a nation, one of whose distinguishing marks is the possession of a particular religion, is yet to create a national life which shall be free from every trace and taint of religious test.

That, therefore, is why Jewish nationalism can be justly attacked as either too entangled with religion, upon the one hand, or as not exclusively religious enough, upon the other.

To veil their own deficiencies and weaknesses, Jewish nationalists like to carry the war boldly into the enemy's country. They tell us that Liberal Judaism tends to devitalise and to emasculate Judaism. It tends to remove from it—not always consciously, but yet actually—what is most distinctive of it and most characteristic. A dogma or two may survive,

but such dogmas are like bones. Flesh and spirit are gone. The bouquet and the aroma have vanished. Judaism is something more than two or three dogmas. It is a view and a manner of life. And these will become progressively unknown, and finally disappear. This it is which is meant when it is said that Liberal Judaism is a mere pale, dogmatic Theism, such as might be held, and is held, by any "Unitarian" Gentile. Even if to the dogmas of the existence and unity of God, of the immortality of the soul, and a few others of this kind, you add the apparently distinctive Jewish dogma of the election and mission of Israel, you are still little nearer to true Judaism. For the dogmas in themselves are nothing: they are the framework, the skeleton. Judaism is the Jewish conception of life, and the Jewish life is based upon that conception. I have not yet used the now dubious-sounding word "culture"; but it might be said that Jewish culture is the spirit of the Jewish religion.

This Jewish conception of life, this Jewish life as based upon that conception, and this Jewish culture, are all unknown to, and ignored by, Liberal Judaism.

It will be seen that the argument is exceedingly specious. It is not quite the same as the old attack of orthodoxy. It does not say that the essence of Judaism lies, not in believing a few dogmas, but in fulfilling a number of commands. It binds itself less to the letter of the written and the oral Law. It assumes a more modern and more attractive shape. It speaks of spirit, of life.

But why is this spirit or this life unknown and foreign to, and ignored and unattainable by, Liberal Judaism? The answer, if I understand the argument aright, is that this spirit, this conception of

life, and this practice of life as based upon the conception, need segregation. They cannot be obtained unless Jews live together, and are kept free from outside influences. A few Englishmen, scattered over Russia, France and Germany, could not maintain the English *êthos*, culture, conception and way of life. On the other hand, if the *national* life in England continues, it may even invigorate the few scattered Englishmen. Just so with the Jews. On the other hand, nobody wants the continuance of ghettos. For in them the segregation is obtained, but at the cost of other evils. You get a Jewish way of life, but not such a way at its best. To obtain *that*, you need a national centre, an autonomous and independent Jewish state. *Then* you can obtain the Jewish conception of life and the Jewish way of life, the Jewish culture and the Jewish spirit, even as the Greeks can obtain their way of life and their spirit by the national life and centre in Greece, and the Serbians theirs by the national life and centre in Serbia. And if this Jewish national centre, which will also be a Jewish spiritual centre, is called into flourishing existence, then it may even be powerful enough to invigorate, and keep alive, and keep Jewish, the scattered Jewish communities in England, America, Russia or elsewhere.

How are we to reply to these argumentations? So far as the first half of them is concerned, no one would deny that freedom has everywhere its trials, its temptations and its dangers. But in order to escape these it is, nevertheless, not desirable to hark back into servitude. So with ourselves. Though emancipation has its perils, we will not run away from it. We will still cherish its ideals. We will not budge from our position. But we will be all

the more keen to devise fresh methods and plans which, while not infringing, as nationalism does, emancipation ideals, may avoid or heal its special perils and dangers. Because, for instance, mixed marriages have increased with alarming strides in Sweden, we must be the more earnest and active in religious education in England. It is a cowardly conception of human nature to assume that freedom must everywhere work the same evils. Forewarned, forearmed. We can take our counter-measures. It is Liberal Judaism which has to see that young Jews and Jewesses are provided with a religious armour suitable for their needs, in harmony with their thought and with the advancing knowledge of the age. It is the work of Liberal Judaism to keep them staunch and true, capable of resisting temptation, and of remaining faithful to Jewish ideals. It is Liberal Judaism which has to show them what, I take it, Swedish Jews have not been shown, that Judaism is worth living for, that it is not merely an antiquarian and picturesque survival, not merely a religion which suited their parents and grandparents, but a religion which is true for them and for their children, a spiritual home for to-day and for to-morrow. The greater the need, the more instant is the call upon our action: the greater the danger, the more moving is the appeal.

But the second part of the argument is far the more interesting and the more positive. Yet to reply to it adequately would need an essay to itself. For the reply would have to contain a full exposition of Liberal Judaism, showing all that it is, and is yet capable of becoming, and dealing with its relations to, and its differences from, other Unitarian and Theistic faiths. That is clearly impossible here.

But a few words must be said about the doctrine of a special Jewish conception of life and of a Jewish way of life as based upon that conception, and also about the doctrine of a special Jewish culture. All these need, it is said, Jewish segregation. Concentration alone can produce them in such force and in such continuance that they may not only preserve Judaism in the zone of segregation, but also outside it.

What is this Jewish conception of life? What is this Jewish way of life? What is this Jewish culture?

We must assume that the Jewish conception of life and the Jewish culture relate to religion and morality. What, then, are they? Can they be stated in words? The Jewish conception of life, as found, for instance, in the Rabbinic literature, can be definitely described. So far as it is good and true, it can be lived here and now, in England as well as in Palestine. So far as it is, in our present opinion, obsolete and undesirable, we do not regret its disappearance. We must not be imposed upon by words. The Liberal Jewish saint of to-day is just as saintly and just as Jewish as the saint of the ghetto. Our conception of life to-day we have every right to call as Jewish as the conception of life formed by any Rabbinic or mediaeval Jew. Judaism does not mean something fixed and undeveloping. It grows. And our conception of life grows. It grows in depth and in purity; it grows in many-sidedness. But it does not become un-Jewish or less Jewish because it becomes deeper, purer, more many-sided. We have as much right to the adjective Jewish for *our* religious and ethical ideas and *our* conception of life as ever had our predecessors. In a sense, indeed, the truer and greater the conception,

the more Jewish it is. Our descendants will, I trust, have a nobler and greater religion and conception of life than we; but these will not be *less* Jewish on that account—they will be *more* Jewish.

What is Jewish culture? If any comparison is made between a Jewish culture and a Greek, English or Serbian culture, all of which, it is said, require for their due production and maintenance a national centre and a national life, the cloven hoof of the argument is displayed. For at once Judaism is compared with a nation—a religion with a people. Jewish culture cannot be compared with English or Serbian culture, any more than Christian culture could be so compared. It is really nationalism which is being put forward in a religious disguise. The Jews as a nation are to develop a national culture. This national culture we Liberal Jews repudiate. We have neither place for it nor desire.

What in a *religious* and *ethical* sense Jewish culture may be we are not told. It can hardly, I imagine, be something different from the Jewish conception of life of which we have already heard.

Let us, however, probe the matter a little further. So far as there may be something in it more than nationalism, it seems, I think, to be this. The religion and "culture" of Europe or America are Christian. The literature is Christian; the art is Christian; the civilisation is Christian. In our Western environment a man may be, if you please, a dogmatic atheist. But his culture, even five-sixths of his "conception of life," are none the less Christian. So with the Jews. Where they live on equal terms with "their fellow-citizens of other creeds," their culture and five-sixths of their conception of life are Christian. It is no matter that they (like

the atheist) hold a few dissentient religious dogmas. Christian literature, Christian art, a hundred subtle influences of Christian civilisation, make up much more of what they are than a few abstract religious dogmas. Their conception and way of life are, therefore, in very truth more Christian than Jewish, just as the atheist's conception and way of life are, in all probability, more Christian than atheist. To produce a Jewish conception and way of life you must have segregation, a powerful and concentrated national life, not in the ghetto, but in a free and autonomous state.

In this form of the argument the two extremes touch. Anti-Semitic writers have objected to the Jews because, in their opinion, the Jews cannot, and do not, assimilate Christian culture and the Christian conception of life. Jewish nationalists object to the results of emancipation and to the unsegregated life of the Jews in European countries because, in their opinion, the Jews assimilate Christian culture and the Christian conception of life too much! Both the anti-Semites and Jewish nationalists agree, however, in assuming the existence of a Christian culture and a Christian conception of life, which is opposed to, and different from, Jewish culture and a Jewish conception of life. The anti-Semites presumably think that the Jewish culture and conception of life are not only different, but inferior; the Jewish nationalists presumably think that they are not only different, but better; or do they refuse to appraise the quality or the truth, but simply cling to the *difference*, and declare that it is for the world's benefit that varieties of culture should be preserved? On this last point I am not clear.

But the argument as such is not without its force.

There is no doubt, for instance, that the influences which we drink in from literature, to mention only one feature in our composite culture, must be enormously subtle and powerful. Take the case of Jews who owe much to Tennyson, Browning, Ruskin, Carlyle. Are not these four writers in their different ways impregnated with Christian teaching? And, more generally, are not the influences to which we are subjected for six days in the week, which we imbibe at all the pores of our mental, moral and spiritual skins, and from which, if we live among them, there is no escape, much stronger in shaping our characters and our conception of life than a few dogmas which we are taught on Saturdays and in scraps of "religious education"?

But do these indubitable influences really harm and deform our Judaism? I do not think so. It is possible that they may be slowly prejudicial to *orthodox* Judaism, for certain modern ideas (though not, I think, specifically *Christian* ideas) do, perhaps, undermine the old orthodox Jewish position. In the long run we cannot live a divided life in watertight compartments, though it is amazing how powerful and fresh in more generations than one such a life can be. What chiefly undermines Orthodox Judaism (apart from practical difficulties, with which I am not here concerned) is not, however, Christian culture or a Christian conception of life, but the results of historic and critical investigation. And these results will tell against Orthodox Christianity, though less rapidly, no less than against Orthodox Judaism.

I admit that if we were to assume a number of Jewish communities, constituting a small and scattered minority, distributed over a huge area, among a population that professed a *wholly alien* culture and

conception of life, a culture and a conception which was wholly non-Jewish, and not only non-Jewish, but also low, degrading, false, then I should view the situation with alarm.

But the actual condition of things is very different. Nor am I intimidated by the possible rejoinder that the danger is greater just *because* the surrounding culture and conception of life are *not* wholly hostile, different, alien. Christian culture and civilisation are the product of various elements, one of which is the Jewish and one of which is the Hellenic element. It is a composite culture. A composite conception of life, though composite, does not mean unharmonious or discordant. So far, then, as Judaism is concerned, I should say that the Christian culture and conception of life contain much which is congruent to Judaism or which is essentially Jewish; that they contain some things which are supplementary and complementary to the best and highest Jewish ideas; that they contain a few things which are antipathetic to Judaism. As regards, then, the first class, there can be no objection to our assimilating it all. As regards the second, I hold that Liberal Judaism will be all the richer and truer for assimilating it. As regards the third, it can be trusted to be alive enough and strong enough to reject the food which is discordant with its own organism and unsuited to its own life. Moreover, if I read the signs of our age aright, the third class is slowly diminishing. There is much in modern culture and in the modern conception of life which is more sympathetic to Judaism than to the mediaeval conception of Christianity. On the whole, the modern conception of life tends to become not *less* Jewish, but *more* Jewish. If this statement is true, it is most important, though

the proofs or illustrations of it cannot be attempted here. But it may at least be said that the whole modern European attitude to earthly life in its relation to the life after death is far more Jewish than was the prevailing attitude of Europe to that life right up to the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. I, therefore, hold that there is little in our modern environment or "culture" which is disintegrating to Judaism in general or to Liberal Judaism in particular, but that, on the contrary, there is much which may deepen and enrich it. To put Judaism into a corner, to remove it from Europe and America, to isolate it, to segregate its believers, would not make it grander and truer, but would impoverish and degrade it.

As to the Sabbath difficulty, on which I have not touched, I fully admit its strength and its importance. But here, again, Liberal Judaism refuses to cry out and to wail, just as it also refuses to shut its eyes. We must be content at present with palliatives. The tendency of modern civilisation is to diminish rather than to increase the hours of Saturday labour for all. We must be the more keen to do all we can by Friday evening and Saturday afternoon services, and by other means, not merely to get over the difficulty, but also to supply positive counter-influences which will greatly diminish its effect. For that end we possess our minds and our wills : to devise, to react, to create ; to overcome difficulties, not merely to deplore them.

It also seems to be believed that a national centre and national segregation are needed for Jewish literary productivity. It is rightly argued that books by Jews do not constitute *Jewish* literature. It is suggested that the creative period of Jewish literature and

Jewish thought stop when segregation ends. To this argument it is hardly possible to reply, because the age of Jewish emancipation has been too short for any certainty to exist as to its effects upon Jewish thinking and Jewish literature. But it was hardly *national* life which created the best of the Old Testament; it was not national life, in any usual sense of the word, which created the Talmud; it was not national life which stimulated the Jewish Hellenistic literature; it was not national life which produced the Jewish mediaeval philosophers. I admit that all these various works were achieved under segregation, but in regard to two of them, the fertilising agency was not internal, but external, and, as regards the Old Testament, it was also to a curious extent the entry (however unfortunate) of the small Jewish state into the orbit of the world powers of Assyria, Babylonia, Persia, which evoked the speech and message of the Prophets. Agitation and life produced these, not quiet segregation and apartness. "Thought assimilation," says Dr. Emil Hirsch, "is the pre-requisite for vital literature."

There are, indeed, some who vaguely speak of, and desire, a purely *spiritual* centre. But for what end? And is there to be, and can there be, a spiritual centre without a national centre as well? Assuming, however, that there could be such a purely spiritual centre, what would be its utility and what would be its function? People speak of a Jewish university. But surely those who are touched by the modern spirit must look with considerable mistrust upon a sectarian university. What is a Jewish university to teach? Jewish chemistry? Jewish mathematics? Obviously not. Jewish history, then? Jewish philosophy? If by Jewish history

is meant the history of the Jews, that can be taught as well in London as in Jerusalem. But if Jewish history means history from a Jewish point of view, or if Jewish philosophy means philosophy from a Jewish point of view, surely we have got, or are getting, beyond that. In a university, history and philosophy must be taught from *no* special point of view, and certainly not from a *sectarian* point of view. In history and philosophy we must rise above the sects. Our only point of view must be truth, which can best be served from the clash of opinions in a free and wholly unsectarian university. And so, too, with the history of religion, and so, too, even with theology *as it should be pursued at a university, and not at a theological training college.* The new English universities have started free faculties of Theology and of the History of Religion. I hope there may to-morrow be a Professor of Theology who is a Jew, even as to-day there is a Professor of Philosophy. That is the modern tendency; that is the modern direction. Are we going to set up a Jewish university at which the direction is to be turned backwards towards mediaevalism? A Christian, a Jewish, a Mohammedan university; in the future let us hope they will all alike be contradictions in terms.

If it is desired to turn more able Jewish minds to study Jewish history and literature, to work creatively at theology and philosophy, there are other and better means than a national, or even a spiritual, centre. Create some *really* well-endowed colleges and seminaries, run on modern lines and with adequate *freedom*, and what is wanted will be achieved. To these add a *highly paid* ministry, some of whom shall be allowed to have adequate leisure to think, to read, to write.

We do not need *one* centre; we need *many* centres; not one centre, aloof from the pulse and throb of modern civilisation, but many centres, planted right in its midst, yet radiating forth Jewish thought and Jewish conceptions of life from among them. For religious influence and enlightenment I would prefer a noble college in London to a university in Jerusalem. I am not sure that a spiritual centre (if such Rome be) is not a heritage full of difficulties for Roman Catholics; I have no desire to create one (even without a Pope) for Judaism. If, indeed, the Jewish settlements in Palestine should increase and multiply; if, whether wisely or unwisely, an autonomous Jewish state be attempted there, under the suzerainty of one of the Great Powers, it would obviously be as desirable that there should be a university in Palestine as in any other country of the world. But that this university would be of importance and help for Judaism and Liberal Judaism I do not believe. So far as it had any religious influence at all, it would be less likely to be Liberal than Ultramontane. And in Ultramontanism, whether in one religion or in another, there lies danger.

From the religious point of view, Liberal Judaism, which aims at a spiritual universalism, must deprecate the idea of being confined to the limits of a single people or of a single land. From the religious point of view, if the Jews are again to be a nation, Liberal Judaism could only accept such a solution of the so-called "Jewish problem," if Jews can form a nation such as the English or the Italians are, a nation, that is, whose citizens can be of more religions than one.

But religion has become so integral a part of the Jew that if an attempt were made to form a new Jewish

state, it would be exceedingly difficult to know how to deal with it. Nothing could be more abhorrent to the modern spirit, nothing could be more opposed to all that we have claimed and fought for, than to make religion the test of citizenship. And yet in a *Jewish* state what other test could there be? If ten French Christians immigrate into Palestine and live there for five or seven years, are they to be refused the rights of citizenship and naturalisation? Will they not be allowed to become Jews? If they *are* so allowed, how curious; if they are *not* so allowed, how monstrous! The truth is that the Jewish *religion* has made a *Jewish* state almost inconceivable.

There would be, indeed, one method in which the difficulty could be solved, but it is a method which may seem almost too bizarre to be discussed. No doubt this method would remove the religious objections to Jewish nationalism, but the very fact that the adoption of the method seems so dubious suffices to show how deep-rooted the religious objection really is.

If the Jewish religion could be entirely severed from its apparently inseparable connection with the Jewish "nation," then Jewish nationalism would lose its religious obnoxiousness. We should then need two separate words: one to describe a man who was a member of a particular *nation*, one to describe a man who was a member of a particular *religion*. The second man might, so far as race and nation are concerned, be anybody you please. The man who was a member of the *nation* might be called a *Hebrew*. The man who was a member of the *religion* might be called a *Jew*. In such an arrangement there would legitimately be Hebrews who might belong to any religion or to none. Religion and the state

would be wholly dissevered. The state would have to be an *état laïque* in the most rigid sense, even more than the United States. At starting, most Hebrews would also be Jews, but the coincidence would be "accidental," not "essential," just as most Americans are Christians. Outside this Hebrew state there would be, as now, scattered over the other states of the world, and integral citizens of such states, Jewish communities, most of whom would doubtless at first be "Jews" in the old sense, but who *could* be men of any race and any nation, for they would be just a religious community like any other.

There must, in other words, be a complete divorce between nationality and religion. What we claimed in Russia, we must establish among ourselves. As there must be Jews who shall be Americans or Italians, some of whom shall be of Semitic genealogy and some of whom shall not, so must there, in any Jewish state, be citizens of all religions and even citizens of none. There must be men who are by nationality Jews, but by religion Catholics or Protestants. A Jewish state whereof the hallmark or—God forbid—the test of citizenship were religion, would be the lie direct to all our claims for emancipation and for equality, the lie direct to all the ideals and aspirations of Liberal Judaism.

Whether such a comprehensive Jewish or Hebrew nationality can be created need not here be discussed. The difficulty would seem to be that the Jew is really very much more a member of a particular religion than he is a member of a particular race. The one is a permanent essential, the other is a temporary accident. The Jews, if I may prophesy, can never be a nation, or even a people, like the Belgians, the

Serbians or the Greeks. A Serbian may be a Protestant, a Catholic or a Jew, and yet he may be, whether he is the first, the second or the third, a passionate and devoted Serbian. The idea of a devoted Jew, who is also a Protestant or a Catholic, is much more difficult to comprehend. The notion of a Jewish state, wholly divorced from religion, some members of which should be ardent Protestants and some ardent Catholics, but all alike, in national sentiment and patriotic fervour, ardent Jews, is logically correct, but practically almost absurd. And that is another reason why Liberal Judaism cannot tolerate the notion of a Jewish nationality. The Jews have been identified with religion too long. The meaning of being a Jew has been too long associated with the possession of a certain religion—the possession, therefore, of something which is above and beyond nationality, which, in its higher development, breaks the bonds of race, uniting men instead of dividing them—for the words to be once more contracted to mean the members of a single nation, or the citizens of a single state. Judaism means something supernational, something larger than race, greater than a territory, grander than a state. And the word "Jews" should mean those who belong to Judaism, who accept and practise the Jewish faith, be their race and be their nation what it may. That is the ideal of Liberal Judaism, and that is why the vast majority of Liberal Jews reject the whole conception of Jewish nationalism and Jewish nationality.

It is a distant future to which we look forward; it is only in a distant future that we can expect even an approximate realisation of our dreams and aspirations. Meanwhile, we have the present to think of

and to work for, and it may well be that in many practical details the needs of the present may not entirely tally with the vision of the future. Hence the need for caution and for circumspection, and for gradual and careful movement which will not, by any hasty efforts to anticipate to-morrow, cause injustice or injury to-day. For to-day has to prepare for to-morrow, and to-morrow cannot dispense with to-day. Visionaries we may be, but just because of our visions we will not lose sight of the practical requirements of what stands revealed before our eyes. But that we think deeply of, and plan our action with ultimate reference to, a future which neither we nor our sons shall see—of that we are not ashamed, but proud. To look far forward is the privilege of man. We too—and we think with all the better justification because of our faith in God—would echo those words of Cicero which George Eliot chose as the motto of her own great human hymn: "Longum illud tempus quum non ero magis me movet quam hoc exiguum" ("The long ages when I shall [on earth] have ceased to be weigh more with me than this little span of life"). In the translation I have inserted the two bracketed words, for surely it is partly because we affirm that the human spirit is not annihilated at death that most of us can retain our interest and our faith in the future of humanity upon the earth.

THE END

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